FIFTY-SECOND
NATIONAL FOLK FESTIVAL
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PRODUCED BY
THE NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR THE TRADITIONAL ARTS,
JOHNSTOWN AREA HERITAGE ASSOCIATION,
CITY OF JOHNSTOWN,
AND THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE.
Welcome to the 52nd National Folk Festival. This festival is appearing for the first time in Johnstown, Pennsylvania, but its heart has long been connected to the values and heritage reflected in this town. As the first multi-ethnic festival, the first National and all its successors have been well acquainted with the diversity of expressions of culture among the members of communities. Johnstown, with its stunning array of ethnic groups, offers fertile ground for the harvesting of music and dance that have been kept alive by succeeding generations. The men and women who came here to work brought with them the culture of lands from all over the world, and their children now have the opportunity to share their music, dance, crafts, and foodways with their neighbors and with neighbors from around the country.

To all of you who are enjoying the National Folk Festival for the first time, I offer this advice: keep your eyes and ears wide open, absorb the echoes of the past and the hope for the future, and, above all, be prepared to have fun.

Joe Wilson
Executive Director
National Council for the Traditional Arts

Dear Friends:

A common theme running through the lyrics of a recent popular song proclaimed, “love in any language, fluently spoken here.” During the days and nights of the 1990 National Folk Festival in Johnstown, that’s exactly what you’ll hear, because here in Johnstown and throughout Pennsylvania, we have retained a vibrant love for the rich legacy of traditions we have inherited from hundreds of diverse national cultures.

We are intensely proud of our multiethnic heritage and delight in this opportunity to showcase and share those unique gifts with visitors from across the country and, indeed, from around the world.

Founded by German settlers in the early 1800s, Johnstown soon became home to thousands of immigrants from all parts of the globe. The city is a wonderful kaleidoscope of culture that remains an integral part of the community today.

It is, in fact, the strong faith, family values and sense of community first planted by our immigrant ancestors that have enabled this city to weather many economic and natural storms over the years. The Great Johnstown Flood of 1889 and the two major ones that followed in this century, and the decline of the coal and steel industries over the past three decades challenged the hearty people of Johnstown.

But, firmly rooted in their ethnic values, they did more than survive, they prevailed.

As Lieutenant Governor of this Commonwealth, as Chairman of the Pennsylvania Heritage Affairs Commission, and—especially—as a Johnstown native and the proud grandson of Slavic immigrants, I take special pleasure in welcoming you to our city and state and the 1990 National Folk Festival.

I hope you will take full advantage of the many displays of outstanding folk arts and crafts and enjoy the talents and enthusiasm of the numerous traditional arts performers who will be sharing their unique cultures with us.

The 1990 National Folk Festival in Johnstown gives all of us a wonderful opportunity to learn from each other and to more fully appreciate the special multi-ethnic legacy that is incomparably American.

In the end, I know you also will come to appreciate, as I do, the uncommon spirit of the uncommon people who first made Johnstown the community of family and friends we share with you today.

Thank you for joining us in this special celebration, and know that you are always welcome.

With best wishes,

Mark S. Singel
Lieutenant Governor
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Crafts Demonstrators

- Myer Adler
- Norma Thomas
- Frank Valenich
- Myer Adler
- Oleg Ochurovich Kaular
- Maryann Golden
- Pete Holube Jr.
- Pedro Lara
- Anna Rose Fullerton
- Paul Pipta
- Sigrid Piroch
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### SCHEDULE SUNDAY

#### MAIN STAGE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Performance</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12:30 PM</td>
<td>Cherokee Baptist Choir</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:30 PM</td>
<td>Accordion Workshop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:30 PM</td>
<td>\begin{itemize} \item\hspace{1cm} Billy Comiskey \item \hspace{1cm} Preston Frank \item \hspace{1cm} Bud Hendrenski \item \hspace{1cm} Rudy Granola \end{itemize}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:00 PM</td>
<td>Polish Polish Music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:00 PM</td>
<td>Country Blues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:30 PM</td>
<td>Tamburinse Music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:30 PM</td>
<td>Voices of the Soviet Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:30 PM</td>
<td>\begin{itemize} \item\hspace{1cm} Traditional Irish Music \item\hspace{1cm} Liz Carroll \item \hspace{1cm} Billy Comiskey \item \hspace{1cm} Daithi Sproule \end{itemize}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:30 PM</td>
<td>\begin{itemize} \item\hspace{1cm} Continental Gypsy Strings \item \hspace{1cm} Missoula Stringband \item \hspace{1cm} Missouri Fiddlers \end{itemize}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:30 PM</td>
<td>Blues &amp; Blues Music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5:00 PM</td>
<td>Cherokee Baptist Choir</td>
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</tbody>
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#### TEN ACRE STAGE

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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12:30 PM</td>
<td>Linhaua Yedeco Music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:30 PM</td>
<td>Preston Frank &amp; the Zedrook Family Band</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:30 PM</td>
<td>Cherokee and the Comities</td>
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#### CRAFTS AND FOODWAYS

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#### PERFORMERS 52ND NATIONAL FOLK FESTIVAL

- **Liz Carroll**, **Billy McComiskey**, and **Daithi Sproule**

   The Irish have been part of this country for over three hundred years, and their music has long had an impact on American culture. The greatest impact was first felt in the 1840s as large numbers of Irish Catholics began emigrating to America to escape the famine and poverty of their homeland. They settled in cities such as Boston, New York, Philadelphia, and Chicago, where they performed in pubs, dance halls, and kitchen jam sessions. Great Irish artists, originally from widely-separated communities, suddenly found themselves neighbors in packed American urban environments. This mingling of different styles created a period of intensive musical exchange within the genre, a period of sharing and learning enhanced by feelings of nostalgia for Ireland and its music. A great new Irish-American music was created, one that eventually jumped the Atlantic and influenced artists in the old country.

   This process continues today as younger musicians both in Ireland and in the U.S. bring new skills, tunes, and influences to the music. We are proud to present three of the best of America's young Irish musicians at the 52nd National Folk Festival.

   Liz Carroll grew up in Chicago, the daughter of Irish immigrants. Her father played the button accordion and her maternal grandfather, Tom Cahill, was a respected fiddler in county Limerick. She took her first fiddle lessons at the age of nine from a Dominican nun and was soon playing in competitions in the U.S. and Ireland. At age 18 she became the second American to win the All-Ireland fiddle championship, a feat she has repeated many times. She has recorded two solo albums and has appeared on several others, and she is considered one of the finest Irish fiddlers in the world today. She lives in Chicago with her husband Charles and their children Patrick and Alison.

   Billy McComiskey has been playing the button accordian, on since he was six years old. He was born and raised in Brooklyn, a community well-known for its fine Irish music. There he was exposed to the music of such greats as Martin Mulvihill, Larry Redican, and his beloved teacher, Sean McGlynn, a player of tremendous talent. McGlynn, a favorite performer at two National Folk Festivals, was very proud of his star student. Billy has been an All-Ireland accordion champion and was a long-time member of the respected band The Irish Tradition. He currently lives in Baltimore, where he works as a machinist.

   Daithi Sproule was born in Derry City in Northern Ireland. He is an outstanding singer and guitarist, with a large repertoire of rare and beautiful songs. He has recorded several albums and has toured with such outstanding musicians as Tommy Peoples, Paddy O'Brien, and James Kelly. He currently lives in Minneapolis, where he teaches Celtic Studies courses at the University of Minnesota.

- **John Cephas** and **Phil Wiggins**

   Since 1934 the National Folk Festival has featured some of the finest bluesmen in the country. One of the early bluesmen at the National was W.C. Handy, billed as the "Father of the Blues," who appeared at the 5th National Folk Festival in Washington, D.C., in 1938. As a tribute to this great musician, the Blues Foundation established an annual "W.C. Handy Blues Award" for outstanding blues musicians. In 1987, "Bowling Green" John Cephas and "Harmonica Phil" Wiggins traveled to Memphis, Tennessee, to claim the Foundation's "Best Traditional Album" award for their recording "Bow Days of August." They came home with the "Blues Entertainers of the Year" honors as well.

   John and Phil's first performance together was at the 38th National Folk Festival in 1976 as members of Wilbur "Big Chief" Ellis' band. Since that time they have carried their "Piedmont Blues" to all parts of the U.S., as well as to Europe, Africa, Latin America, and the Caribbean. This regional American music takes its name from the Piedmont—the foothills region of Virginia, South Carolina, North Carolina, Georgia, and Florida—and draws heavily on the earlier fiddle and banjo-based black stringband music of the area. Some important early Piedmont blues musicians were Blind Boy Fuller, Reverend Gary Davis, and Sonny Terry, and their influence can be heard in the repertoire and technique of John and Phil. John also cites Blind Lemon Jefferson and Tampa Red, as well as music of the ragtime era, as influences on his playing style.

   John Cephas started playing blues on the guitar with his aunt and other local musicians in Bowling Green, Virginia when he was 10 years old. Family, friends, and neighbors would get together on the weekends for country "breakdowns" or house parties, and good music and dance were always a part of these gatherings. John describes his style of guitar playing as "an alternatingthumb and finger style where you play a background while you're playing the leading parts," thus getting the guitar to "say..."
what you want it to say while keeping the rhythm behind it." The result, a full, melodically precise technique accomplished by complex chord patterns, makes the Piedmont guitar style technically challenging. Restrained and well-articulated vocals are also part of the Piedmont blue style.

Phil Wiggins was born in 1954 in Washington, D.C., and became interested in blue harmonica as a young man. He has played with many Washington area blues musicians, including Archie Edwards and John Jackson, and he attributes his style to his years of playing with the late Flora Molton, a renowned Washington street singer and guitarist. Phil amazes audiences with his boundless stream of harmonica pyrotechnics which he weaves through, behind, and between the singing and playing of his partner John.

The Cherokee Indian Baptist Choir

Before the coming of the Europeans, the Cherokees possessed a highly developed culture which included a rich tradition of songs and chants accompanied by drumming. These songs and their associated dances were performed at seasonal celebrations of planting and harvesting, as well as at ceremonies for marriage, burial, travel, hunting, and fishing.

When European settlers arrived they brought with them Christian missionaries who undertook to convert the native people to European beliefs. Many Cherokees were converted—some became preachers and taught the Christian faith in their own language. By the early 1800s, these Cherokee preachers began to teach European hymns with the words translated into Cherokee. Some composed new hymns which utilized elements of tribal music and thought. These songs enabled the congregations to express their Christian faith in their own way and in their own language, and they were preserved by the people.

The Cherokee people when their nation was forcibly resettled from Tennessee, North Carolina, and Georgia to Oklahoma’s “Indian Territory” in 1839.

The development by Sequoyah of an 85-character alphabet for the Cherokee language created an explosion of literacy among the Cherokee. As soon as a printing press was developed that could reproduce the Cherokee characters, a Bible and hymn book—still in use in bilingual Cherokee congregations—were among its first publications.

The combination of words printed in shape-notes (a system of musical notation which uses different note shapes rather than staff placement to indicate pitch) spread quickly through Cherokee communities and could be taught and learned by sight-read through the entire book. As a result, many of the early hymns are still sung by Cherokee congregations and have become an important means of preserving and teaching the language.

The Cherokee Indian Baptist Choir sings many of these original hymns, along with Cherokee translations of songs like “Amazing Grace” and “What a Friend We Have in Jesus.” Like most Cherokee congregations, they sing without accompaniment, often in 4-part harmony. To the European ear, their music—a blend of elements from two cultures—sounded at once familiar and exotic.

CONTINENTAL GYPSY STRINGS

When great numbers of Hungarians and Eastern European Gypsies began coming to the U.S. in the mid- to late-1800s, they found ready employment in the rapidly-growing industrial cities of the East and Midwest. These new immigrants settled in close, homogeneous communities where they could maintain their religion, language, and music. This resulted in the largest Hungarian and Gypsy peoples was in Homestead, Pennsylvania, where there was plenty of work in the local mines and mills. The two communities have remained together in Homestead, reinforcing common traits as time and distance have separated them from their homelands. As a result, the area has been a major center of Hungarian-American music since around 1900, a trait that will surely continue as long as George Batyi and the Continental Gypsy Stringer live there.

The leader of the group is violinist and guitarist George Batyi, who comes from a long line of musicians. The Batyi family has had a band in the Homestead area for over 80 years, and George remembers attending performances of his grandfather’s and uncle’s bands as a child. His father played clarinet and violin, and his two grandfathers played clarinet and violin. George’s grandparents spoke Slovak, Hungarian, and Romany, and George is familiar with the music and language of each of these cultures. Still only in his thirties, George Batyi has a reputation as an outstanding violinist, and the Continental Gypsy Strings are in great demand for events in the Homestead area. Although specializing in Hungarian and Gypsy music, they are equally at home with many other types of Balkan and Eastern European music.

The other members of the Gypsy Strings are Greg Feltz on accordion, his wife Darlene Bouligoff Feltz on vocals, Dennis Kurzawinski on clarinet, and Chuck Cubelich on bass. The band will play with confidence and dedication, a favorable indication for the future of zydeco music.

PRESTON FRANK AND THE ZYDECO FAMILY BAND

The Frank family from Oberlin, Louisiana play youthful yet traditional zydeco music. They came from the lowlying prairies of Texas to Monroeville, Louisiana, where zydeco is a popular music for dancing. Over the past 30 years the French Creole community has fully developed this distinctive sound, drawing upon elements of the Acadian French, Caribbean Creole, and African American traditions. Over the years, it has been referred to as "laa-la," "jump," "push and pull," or simply "French" music. The term "zydeco" is an abbreviation of "les haricots," from a popular song entitled "Les haricots sont pas sales" ("Snap Beans Aren’t Salty"). Musicians developed an infectious beat with this song, and dancers constantly requested to hear "that notion." The term stuck, especially as artists such as the late Clifton Chenier combined the French sound with popular rhythm and blues influences. Chenier, through his recordings and performances, brought zydeco to the attention of the nation.

Chris Strachwitz, owner of the small but highly influential Arhoolie recording company, had a pivotal role in this process. A zydeco concert was heard in a half dozen halls in Louisiana and three or four in Houston, Texas when it came to his attention. The sound was that of the accordion and washboard, a front porch rural music moved to small dance spaces. Strachwitz asked Chenier, who was Creole but who had been recording R&B in English, to record in French. Chenier reluctantly agreed and by his account was astounded to find himself with a regional hit song. Zydeco has since been recognized throughout the world as a distinctive American music.

Preston Frank and his family perform a zydeco that still shows some of its rural roots. Preston has been playing accordion for over a dozen years, developing a solid zydeco style accompanied by clear vocals. Preston’s third-row accordion gives him the ability to hit the "bluey" sound at the end of a note. His lead is complemented by his uncle, Carlton Frank, who plays fiddle Cajun-style, with rhythmic bowing and open strings. Accompanying Preston and his uncle are three young musicians, all children of Preston and Louise Frank, who play with confidence and dedication, a favorable indication for the future of zydeco music.

THE GRAVES FAMILY

It is a special treat to have the Graves family at the 52nd National Folk Festival. The tradition that they share are very old and very rare, in some cases going back to the early 19th century and the settlement of Missouri.

William Graves is a fine fiddler player, a singer of old songs, and one of the few players of the mountain dulcimer to come from the Ozarks. He was born into a musical family in 1917. His grandfather, John Maltsew, was part-Cherokee, a Civil War veteran and a builder and player of lap dulcimers. Maltsew is believed to have brought the first dulcimers into Missouri on his return from the Civil War, and he made the fine instrument William Graves plays today.

William’s mother was a Kentucky-born fiddler who knew many tunes in the "cross-key" style popular in her native state during her childhood. His older brothers and sisters were fiddlers as well and William originally wanted to play fiddle too, but by the time he came along his mother felt the family needed a dulcimer player. He showed immediate promise on the instrument, learning the old ballads and modal fiddling style from his mother and grandfather. (Eventually, he got to take up the fiddle as well.)

William married his wife Doris in August, 1929—he started to learn to play dulcimer while they were courting—and he spent the next several decades farming, working construction, and raising a family of eight children. He played for local parties, and for the occasional local benefit. William’s retirement afforded them an opportunity to play more frequently for community gatherings and at events sponsored by the Missouri Cultural Heritage Center. When not performing,
From left to right: The Holmes Brothers (photo courtesy Roxander Records), Bud Hendonski and the Corsairs, Floiry Jagoda

William and Doris lived on the farm where Doris was raised, teaching younger musicians and visiting with their eight children, 26 grandchildren, and 25 great-grandchildren.

The Holmes Brothers

After twenty years of playing in the blues and R&B clubs of New York City and Long Island, the Holmes brothers ( bassist Walt on bass, Sherman Holmes, and drummer Popsie Dixon) are finally getting some well-deserved national attention. Their music is an exciting blend of blues, country, and R&B, filtered through tight, gospel-style vocals. They list among their diverse influences family and friends, as well as the popular influences of their time: Bo Diddley, Wilbert Harrison, Hank Williams, Rosetta Tharpe, and C.C. deficiency.

Bud Hendonski of Coraopolis, near Pittsburgh, has been playing polka music for almost 30 years and leading his band, The Corsairs, for 23 years. Bud was born in Copasburg, Pennsylvania in 1944 into a second-generation Polish family. He got his first accordion at the age of nine and was working with local bands by the time he was sixteen. Upon graduating from high school, he joined the Bobby Gazda band, then a popular Pennsylvania group with an imaginative, jazz-influenced repertoire. After a stint in the Marines, Bud formed the Corsairs in 1967. Drawing on his experience with the Gazda band, he formed a group featuring a brassy, jazz-influenced sound. The band had its first hit with “Polka Swing,” a tune still popular among polka musicians. The Corsairs have made several records since then and have performed all across the U.S. They hold to the sound of “big-band polka,” popular in the 1950s, featuring brass and woodwind instruments in swing arrangements.

In addition to Bud, the band includes Gene Turzer on bass, Al Wrubleski on drums, Larry Davis and Skip McCulliffe on trumpets, Terry Magurski on saxophone, Rick Mansfield on sax and clarinet, and Eddie Skinger on vocals.

Flory Jagoda has been called the “keeper of the flame” of Balkan Sephardic music. She is a singer of rare Ladino songs who learned to speak and sing in a rare, dialect-like language. She says she never speaks the language, but only sings songs from it. “My mother never spoke Polish. She was a bobovka, and she just sang.”

The foundation of the Lithuanian Folksong Quartet is the traditional music of Bronius Kryks, a Lithuanian immigrant born in 1918. Like many traditional singers, Bronius Kryks grew up in a musical family. Both his parents were singers, as were his five brothers and sisters. His father sang the Latin vespers in church and all the children were in the choir.

In 1949, Kryks emigrated to America where he took a job as a chemical engineer with the Eastman Kodak Company in Rochester, N.Y. He carried with him the memory of the hundreds of traditional songs which he had learned as a youth, but which he had been forbidden to sing since 1940, when the Soviet Union annexed Lithuania.

The songs in Mr. Kryks’ repertoire reflect the varied experiences of a generation of Lithuanians who saw the transformation of their country from a nation with a strongly developed economy to a modernized independent nation. That same generation lived through the trauma of both German and Russian occupations, fleeing as refugees and eventually settling in America. His repertoire contains traditional agricultural, holiday, and family feasting songs, children’s songs, songs of soldiers and prisoners, song-filled with symbolism and images of the Lithuanian landscape (for example: linden trees always symbolize women and birches symbolize men—sometimes the branches are bowed, sometimes broken, sometimes entwined).

The Lithuanian Folksong Quartet includes Joseph Kasinskas on guitar, Bridget Kasinskas on violin, and Rasa Kryks singing with her father. A second generation Lithuanian-American, Joseph Kasinskas is a composer and music teacher who has been working with Kryks to record and transcribe the more than two hundred songs in Kryks’ memory. They have paid particular attention to recreating the harmonies he learned from his mother and grandmother.

The State of Missouri can boast of a rich and varied tradition of fiddle music. All across the state there are excellent bluegrass, jazz, and country players who are noted for their outstanding abilities on this demanding instrument. Dance, jam sessions, and (more recently) commercials have all kept the many traditions alive and have helped to maintain a high level of performance. Two of the finest of the Missouri fiddlers will be appearing at the National Festival, although from different generations and backgrounds, they share a love for the older ways of playing and a deep commitment to keeping those styles alive.

Lyman Enoe was born in 1901 in Cole County, which lies in the upper Ozark mountains. His father was a well-known farmer and musician, and Lyman grew up in a musical environment. He started playing the fiddle at an early age, following in the footsteps of his father and other local musicians.

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Otonowa

Otonowa is a group of Afro-Cuban musicians based in Washington, D.C. They derive their name from a Lucumi word meaning "the stars." Most of the members of the group arrived in the United States in 1980 with the Mariel boatlift, which brought many Afro-Cuban musicians to these shores and which had an invigorating effect on American musical life. Here in the eastern United States, Afro-Cuban musicians have been very influential in shaping Latin popular music and, to a lesser extent, certain forms of jazz.

Much of Cuba's population is of African descent. Although all Cubans speak Spanish and share many traditions with other Latin American peoples, Afro-Cuban culture still shows its strong African roots. Many Afro-Cubans retain tribal identities, practice African religions, and speak evolved versions of African languages in addition to Spanish. Out of this African heritage, they have preserved several forms of religious music which closely resemble the music of their African ancestors, especially the Yoruba people of Nigeria. Over the past century, Afro-Cubans have developed new musical forms suited to modern Cuban tastes.

One of the most important types of Afro-Cuban religious music is called batá, similar in name to the Nigerian Yoruba drum set called bata. The drums used to play batá, much like their Yoruba relatives, come in sets of three different sizes, each double-headed and double-convoluted in shape. The batá drums are associated with Lucumi culture and religion, the Cuban form of Yoruba-derived religion commonly known as Santería to many people in the United States.

The rumba—not to be confused with the ballroom dance called "rhumba," which was a polite, genteel imitation of the Afro-Cuban rhythm and movement—is an Afro-Cuban musical creation. Actually, there are three main types of rumba: guaguancó, cubanía, and yambú. In recent decades, some of the rhythms and instruments of the religious musical traditions have been incorporated into rumba performances. For example, there is a "new" type of rumba called batá rumba.

As well as playing on the concert stage, Otonowa will be lending their joyous music to some of the popular street parades that have become traditional to the National Folk Festivals. You are all invited to join in.

Polish Heritage Choir

The Polish Heritage Choir was formed in 1988 as an outgrowth of the Johnstown Area Polish Heritage Council. Choirs from several area churches came together to form a musical group dedicated to preserving the Polish language and music.

The choir, under the direction of Michael Filo, sings folk, patriotic, and religious music. Their songs recall the village life, the political life, and the powerful faith that characterize Polish-American ancestry. Although the group's forty-five members come from a variety of backgrounds, almost all have deep ties to the Johnstown area.

In addition to singing at religious ceremonies, the Polish Heritage Choir has appeared at a number of festivals, concerts, and conventions. The choir performed during the Johnstown Flood Centennial's Ethnic Festival in 1989 and at the Great American Homecoming in Johnstown this past summer.

Radost Orchestra

During the late 19th and early 20th centuries large numbers of people from southern Slavic cultures emigrated to the U.S. in search of a better life. Finding employment in the rapidly growing industrial towns of the East and Midwest, these Serbs and Croats settled in an area stretching from western Pennsylvania to Chicago. One of the strongest symbols of this culture is the tamburitza music known throughout the East and Midwest.

"Tamburica" or "tamburitsa" is a generic term for a family of fretted instruments which includes the brac, celo, bugara, harpa, and princa. They range in size from smaller than a mandolin to larger than a standard bass. Tamburitsas, ensembles usually contain various combinations of these instruments, along with an occasional violin or accordion. Although the instruments are played in a driving rhythmic fashion and the music is quite popular for dancing, the soul of tamburitsa music lies in the emotional vocals.

After four generations in the U.S., American-style tamburitza music has developed its own distinctive flavor. The repertoire has adopted and blended songs and dances from many different regions of Yugoslavia, as well as American and Yugoslav popular songs translated into Serbo-Croatian. Often tamburitsa musicians come from other Eastern European cultures, and it is not unusual to hear a Hungarian or Slovenian tune alongside the more common Serbian and Croatian ones. Big community orchestras as well as small groups turn up frequently, and the jam session as the center of tamburitsa teaching.

The Radost Orchestra is one of the best of the young tamburitza bands. Since forming in 1988, they have brought their fiery, technically excellent playing to gatherings, weddings, and festivals in western Pennsylvania and eastern Ohio. The members of the group include Joe Cindrich, the newest member of the group and its lone Croat. He plays brac, the lead instrument in the ensemble, and sing. Dan Vranesevich, who formed the band in early 1988 following a stint with the Banya Luka Orchestra, sings and plays the cello, which supplies counterpoints and harmonies. His brother, Dave Vranesevich plays the bass, the group's part of the rhythm section; he has played in several groups around Pittsburgh including the Kosovovo Orchestra and the Bule Balje, Finally, Paul Milanko, singer and lead and plays the bugara, which is the other half of the rhythm section. He is a former member of the Balkan Serenaders, one of the most respected tamburitza bands in the region.

Moses Racso

Moses Racso was born in 1917 in the rural town of Windsor, North Carolina, and grew up surrounded by music. His father played harmonica and his mother, brother, and three sisters played the piano. When his father took him into town on Saturdays to shop, he would park young Moses on a street corner to listen to a blues musician, with instructions to stay there until he got back. Moses never wandered away. He got his first guitar, a Montgomery Ward mail-order model, when he was thirteen and began learning the gospel, country, ragtime, and western numbers that made up his Piedmont blues repertoire. He learned his music from the church, local street musicians (a man named Gamble Smallwood in particular), and records by blues artists like Blind Boy Fuller and Brownie McGhee. He had to go outdoors to play the blues, though—his mother wouldn't allow it to be played in her house.

Moses left home at 15, travelling around the East and South. He travelled with a band of rag sellers for a while, but eventually did odd jobs in the Carolinas, Alabama, and Mississippi, and finally headed north in the late '30s. He settled in Pennsylvania, where he did construction work and truck
driving. He joined the Navy in 1948, but he was out with a medical discharge in a few months. Soon afterwards, he settled for good in York, Pennsylvania, where he drove a tractor trailer for a living.

Moses kept his guitar with him throughout his travels, playing the blues for drinks or to keep himself company. He added to his repertoire by buying recordings of major blues artists like Big Bill Broonzy, Lightnin’ Hopkins, and Jimmy Reed. "I never took any instrumental ideas, only the words to songs, though," he says.

Rascoe retired from trucking in 1983 and began to work full-time on his playing. He was soon "discovered" by a folk music society in York and began performing in local clubs. His performances on stage in the same relaxed way he played in kitchens and on back porches, telling stories with his voice and his guitar.

*LAUGHING ROBINSON*

LaVaughn Robinson was born 62 years ago in South Philadelphia, home of such great tap dancers as Honi Coles and the Nicholas Brothers and one of the major urban centers where various vernacular street dance forms coalesced into tap. His dancing career began at the age of seven on a linoleum floor, when his mother lifted up her skirts to teach him his first step. Soon he graduated to dancing for change on downtown and South Philly street corners. When he was nearly grown, he began "busking" in neighborhood bars and nightclubts before enlisting in the army in 1945.

Army life found him performing at military facilities around the country, honing his dance skills and picking up experience. In 1947, after his discharge from the service, he turned professional, appearing with Cab Calloway, Tommy Dorsey, Maynard Ferguson, Ella Fitzgerald, Billie Holiday, and Charlie Parker. By 1972, when he went into temporary retirement, stage and nightclub life had become nearly extinct as disco sons crowded out the clubs. Still, he could not resist the high-energy instrument dropped out of the softer, subtler percussive sounds of the tap dancer. Throughout the years, LaVaughn Robinson has maintained his base in the city of Philadelphia, where he has kept both home and community ties strong.

Johnstown's Slovenian Polka Pals play one of the several distinct polka styles popular in the industrial Midwest. Slovenian-style polka differs from Polish polka in a number of ways: there is more emphasis on the accordion and less on brass, and songs are usually Slovenian in origin and are often sung in the Slovenian language.

The Slovenian Polka Pals are an all-star collection of musicians assembled specially for the 23rd National Folk Festival. Their front line less than four accordions, both button box and piano type. The ensemble was put together by Tom Granda and his father Rudy, a local favorite, who led a band in the 1930s and 1940s. The Grandpa band played at dance halls and social clubs throughout western Pennsylvania and had a regular Sunday night show over station WARD for a number of years. Rudy gave up the rigors of a full-time band during the 1970s and currently plays for fun at local picnics, parties, and jam sessions.

Tom Granda began learning the accordion at age 12 from his father and played in his father's band for 15 years. He is known as an excellent stylist and plays frequently for picnics and gatherings in the area. Lou Vozel started playing accordion at age fourteen. After beginning his career with country and western bands, he began playing with polka bands during the 1950s and has played with a number of bands in the Johnstown area. John DeBak holds the record for having the longest career and has performed with several bands from the 1950s to today.

The group's repertoire includes the Tempo Tones and Dr. Joseph Frank and His Recording Polka Band. Olen Berkboile plays the guitar and bass. He is a former member of the Rudy Grandpa Band and is well-known for his work with a number of Johnstown groups. Chuck Seth, the tenor sax player, is another veteran of the Rudy Grandpa Band. He still plays with bands in the Johnstown area. Tony Zupanichak, the drummer, is a member of the John DeBak band and of the well-known group, Eddie and the Slovenses. He and his two sons currently have their own group and run the A to Z Record Studio in Johnstown.

**VOICES OF THE SOVIET UNION**

Americans tend to think of the Soviet Union as one country, with one population and one culture. In fact, it is a collection of republics, with many diverse ethnic groups as are in the U.S. and as many different regional forms of art and music. The Soviet performers at this festival represent four of the literally hundreds of styles of traditional music in the Soviet Union.

**MTEBI CHOIR**

The southwestern area of the Soviet Union, especially the Georgian republic, is home to some of the most developed and deeply-grounded vocal music in the world. Historically, songs have accompanied every facet of life throughout the year: in the field, at prayer, in the church ceremony, and day-to-day events. For every purpose there is a different style of song, each differing in choral and rhythmic structure as well as in content. The common link among them all, however, is their polyphonic harmony and the richness of the singers' voices. Georgians astound listeners with their virtuosic skill and inventiveness—among the singers of western Georgia it is considered shameful to sing the same song twice without new improvisations. The great composer Igor Stravinsky once called Georgian folk songs "a marvel."

The Mtebi Choir is made up of men from the area around Tbilisi in the mountains of central Georgia. Only one is a full-time musician. They have gathered songs from all the regions of Georgia, travelling to learn from performers in person rather than from recordings or written music.

**MUZHITENO CHOIR**

Muzhiteno is a woman's choir from a village in the district of Fyodorovka in the western region of the Ukraine. The group was formed by the high-school teacher Maria K. The region lies between two Slavic tribes: the Krivich and the Vyatich. Over the course of hundreds of years, this small area has absorbed extremely diverse cultural influences and amalgamated them into a unique music style. In the songs of the Muzhiteno Choir, the neighboring cultures can be clearly heard—ancient Slavic wedding songs, round dances, and calendar songs are mixed with south Russian harmonic arrangements and dances.

The women of the Muzhiteno Choir are employed on a state farm and have spent their lifetimes learning this music. The choir was officially founded in 1957 in honor of the 250th anniversary of the October Revolution which gave rise to the Soviet state.

**NEGRO HORN ENSEMBLE**

The area near the city of Nerekhta (about 200 miles northwest of Moscow on the upper Volga river) is known as a center of native instrumental music. The ensemble art of Nerekhtskoi shephard’s horn players has developed on a close contact and rivalry with their southern neighbors from the area around Vladimir. This rivalry has resulted in a style of ensemble playing among Nerekhtskoi musicians that closely resembles their vocal folk music: one instrument taking over wherever another leaves off, the change from player to player being almost indistinguishable. The Nerekhtskoi Horn Ensemble plays two varieties of instruments, both handmade of wood and bark. The smaller ones are called rozhni and the larger ones are called basy. The term rozhni (in time), nu ton (fit), nozhki (fits) in the rozhni (fit) describe the voicing and texture of the ensemble playing, which varies from song to song.

**OLEG OSERHIVICH KUULAR**

The only solo tradition represented among Voices of the Soviet Union is also the one furthest from western musical traditions. Oleg Kuular is a throat singer, master of a style of singing in which a single voice produces more than one note at a time. He learned this remarkable art in his childhood in the Tuvan Republic, where he still lives and where he teaches his son the style.

Kuular has mastered four different types of throat singing, all using overtones to produce the sound of more than one note at once. Siiyry is the most striking and brightest style—the singer uses the highest register of the voice to create a ringing sound. Songs in the rhomboid style are a little softer, while in the borboroolay style a bass pedal tone in the middle register touches on the fifth overtone above the octave, resulting in a three-voiced sound. Songs in the kahali style are most unusual, in which the singer's voice resonates at the limit of the low register.
CRAFTS DEMONSTRATORS
52ND NATIONAL FOLK FESTIVAL

MYER ADLER

Myer Adler was born in 1914 and raised in a shtetl in Poland. He came to the United States in 1949 and ran a grocery store in Powelton Village with his family until the 1970s. In reflection, Mr. Adler observes of his experience: "I came from a backward place. I came to a modern place." He is retired now, but he spends much time in his basement creating the goggrets and dreidels used in the celebration of Jewish holidays.

Myer hadn't made a gogrette or dreidel for decades when, about seven years ago, a friend asked him to make a dreidel for his child. This request became the touchstone to a revival of his interest in these items. When he was young, Myer and his peers made simple goggrets and dreidels from all manner of discarded odds and ends, scraps of wooden crates and broken furniture that became much-used objects again.

The gogrette is a noise maker used in conjunction with sacred readings in synagogue during the celebration of Purim. This holiday commemorates Queen Esther's successful effort to foil King Haman's plan to slaugther the Jewish people. The dreidel is a toy used by children during the celebration of Chanukah. A Hebrew letter on each side is assigned points in the game. In sum, the letters mean, "A great miracle happened there." Each player spins the dreidel in turn and wins the number of points represented by the letter that faces upward when the dreidel stops spinning and falls.

Myer still uses almost anything that comes to hand to make his crafts, although he occasionally purchases an interesting or exotic piece of wood which he shapes with a lathe and hand chisels. Each dreidel is painted with a colorful pattern of stripes and flowers that dazzle when the top is spun.

BUN EM

Bun Em arrived in the United States as a refugee from Cambodia in 1989, along with her four daughters and two sons. Her maternal ancestors were always considered the village weavers, and Bun Em learned to weave from her mother when she was about ten years old. In the United States, however, she had to retire from her former status-filled work as weaver, farmer, and merchant. Her children report that the provision of a loom and weaving materials by a group of interested Pennsylvania women made Bun Em truly happy for the first time in nine years.

Today Bun Em has been recognized as a master weaver by the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, from which she has received grants that have encouraged her daughters to study the dying of the silk, the winding of raw silk into cones, and the dressing of the warp with its 3,500 single threads. Although Bun Em's work appears to be mostly solid colors, close examination reveals that the warp threads are a different color from the weft threads that cross, producing unusual and shimmering hues. The subtlety of a master Cambodian weaver is expressed in the basic decisions of which colors enhance others.

Bun Em is once again the "village weaver," but now her work helps to keep her fellow Cambodian-Americans in touch with their heritage. Her bright pure silk hand-woven saronc skirts are now worn to Cambodian weddings and celebrations throughout the United States. This September, Bun Em will be one of thirteen artists receiving a National Heritage Fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts.

ANNA ROSE FULLERTON

Like many young women from County Donegal in Ireland, Anna Rose Fullerton learned to make lace as a child. She went to school every Saturday for four years to learn the intricate skill, and she earned an income from making lace when she was between the ages of seven and thirteen. Mrs. Fullerton emigrated to the United States in 1956 and settled in Philadelphia, where she currently lives.

Irish lace is made with a very fine needle, very similar to a crochet hook. The thread is a fine, long strand cotton. Usually, white or off-white cotton is used, but green is also popular. The thin, rose, and shamrock are the most common designs used and these are worked into the item made by the craftswoman as she sees fit. Paper patterns are not used. The woman's eye and hands guide her work to assume the proper design and elimination. In Ireland, lace was made for collars and cuffs worn on dresses, for gloves, christening gowns, table covers, and altar cloths. The quintessential "Irish lace curtains," often seen through the window of a country parlor, were found in communities in America, were probably made by machine.

Anna Rose Fullerton has made many lace items for her own wardrobe and also makes cuffs and collars for the

MARYANN GOLDEN

Wycananka (vee-chee-nan-kee) is an ornamental Polish art involving the cutting of paper. A piece of paper is folded in a special way, one cut is made, and the result is a stylized animal or geometric form. The craft was developed in the early 19th century in Poland, reaching its heyday around the turn of the century. It was brought to America by Polish immigrants around that time.

Maryann Golden is a Belvedon resident of Johnstown and a wycananka artist of some note. She learned the elementary skills from her grandmother as a small child, and she still cuts the paper with sheep shears as her grandmother did. She does, however, augment her style with patterns from books and from other artists. Although Maryann has been doing cuttings her entire life, she has only begun practicing the art seriously over the last few years. She works in the evenings and weekends, during off time from her job at the J.D. Fleck Paint Company. She says she rarely spends more than ten minutes to a week depending on the complexity of the pattern.

Maryann has shown her work at the Flood Museum and at local church events, and she demonstrated at last year's Heritage Festival. She takes her work seriously—she feels that by working in wycananka she is helping to keep her Polish heritage alive.

PETE HOLUBRZ JR.

An ancient Ukrainian legend states that if the Ukrainian people stop decorating eggs the world will come to an end. The Holub family of Johnstown has been working to prevent this for five generations now, practicing the ancient Ukrainian art of egg decoration, or pysanka. Pysanka artists use Hollowed eggs, dyes, beeswax, and a small stylus called a kiska to create very beautiful and intricately detailed pieces of art through a process similar to batik. The chicken egg is the most commonly used, but occasionally quail, duck, and even ostrich eggs are decorated. Mr. Holubsz says it takes anywhere from three to fifteen hours to finish an egg, depending on its size and the complexity of the pattern.

Pete Holubz Jr. is a third-generation pysanka artist from Johnstown. Born in 1925 in a Ukrainian family, Pete saw the ornately decorated eggs his mother and grandmother were making during his childhood and began to learn the skills himself. He has worked at the craft throughout his life and began to practice more seriously about thirty years ago, working on eggs during his off hours from his post office job. He also taught the skill to his son Pete Holubz III, who proved an eager and capable student and who has won awards for his eggs a number of times.

Since his retirement from the post office, Mr. Holubz has demonstrated egg decorating at a number of schools and churches, as well as on local TV. He is often accompanied by his son and by a grandson, Pete Holubz IV, who represents the fifth generation in Pete's family to carry on this art.

PEDRO LARA

Pedro Lara's pilatas represent a unique combination of tradition and personal creativity. Mr. Lara came to America from the state of Guanajuato in central Mexico, an area of the country where traditions of toy-making have flourished. A large boy's pilata was originally a Spanish custom practiced in conjunction with the three-day carnival introducing the Lenten season. In Mexico, the pilata is used during Posadas—nine days of celebration preceding Christmas. Mr. Lara saw pilatas at celebrations when he was younger and recalls having the honor of breaking open a few.

Pedro Lara learned to make pilatas after he came to the Delaware Valley. His teacher—a man from Mexico—taught him the basic technique of paper-mache and cutting the colorful tissue paper that covers the pilata. Beyond this foundation, Pedro relies on his own imagination to imbue his pilatas with character. Mr. Lara's work experience as a mason, automobile mechanic, and electrical apparatus repairman developed the ingenuity and mechanical ability he invests in his creations. He has made about fifty pilatas, of virtually any shape requested, but each always reflects his special perception and imagination. For instance, when asked to make a pumpkin, the resulting pilata appeared in the shape of a gourd native to Mexico.

Traditionally, the body of the pilata was a specially made round clay pot with handles for a rope to pass.
From left to right: 
Sigrid Piroch 
Gino Russo (photo courtesy International House-Philadelphia) 
Norma Thomas

Through. The pot was decorated with colored tissue paper. Due to the scarcity of the proper kinds of clay, paper-mache is usually used to make the body of piñatas in America. The star is a popular piñata shape, and it is usually filled with oranges, sugar cane, small toys, peanuts, a hard pink candy, and other treats like small wrapped boxes filled with candy. A rope is threaded through handles on the piñata, passed over a bean or tree limb, and held by someone who raises and lowers the piñata to frustrate the blindfolded stick-wielder. As soon as the piñata is broken and the contents spill forth, the celebrants scramble to collect a share. With Pedro Laro's skill and imagination, his decorative piñatas promise a continuing celebration of the Mexican Christmas tradition.

**PAUL PIPTA**

Johnstown's Paul Pipta is a maker of ornately-decorated religious wood carvings, which calls icons. He has been carving for about eight years, since taking a class from the Johnstown wood carvers' association. He was born into a Russian family in Johnstown in 1944, and has lived there his entire life.

The materials that Pipta uses to create his icons are simple. His wood is usually basswood or butternut, and his primary tool is a wood carver's knife. His work during his off hours from his job as a draftsman for the Miller Pickering company, and he says most carvings take a couple of weeks, although he's been working on some for years. His carvings have been shown at local art and carving shows, and several are on display in local churches including St. Jerome's and St Peter's in Johnstown. Paul has a deep commitment to his God, and his carvings are a tangible expression of this. When asked why he does them, he replied simply, "I feel as if I have to."

**SIGRID PIROCH**

Sigrid Piroch is a third-generation Slovakian concerned with the preservation of Czechoslovakian heritage. "The few Slovak societies which developed in this country did not encourage the preservation of our textiles," she says, "and very little knowledge remains from Czechoslovakia..." where the handweaving tradition is dying out with "progress" toward modernization.

Sigrid has studied with many of the finest weavers through the years. She also works with whatever is available. She's not sure how long it takes her to make a quilt, but one of her daughters often estimates that it takes about 300 hours. Her reasons for practicing her art are many: she enjoys the challenge of creating, she finds the actual process of quilting fun, and the finished products provide material for the yearly mission quilt auction held by her Mennonite church.

**GINO RUSSO**

Gino Russo was trained as a cabinetmaker under his father's direction in the family's cabinet shop in his hometown of Luzzi, Italy. Gino represents the twelfth generation of cabinetmakers in his family. During the summer months, he would go out to the mountains in company of other family members, and they would spend weeks at a time making furniture in remote valleys. The work during these sojourns required that the craftspeople choose their timber on the stump and cut it themselves. The way the tree fell provided information about the straightness of the grain in the wood and its balance throughout the trunk.

The area in which Luzzi was located was devastated during WWI and WWII for the continuation of the shop seemed dim, so Gino and his family decided that he should go to America. Establishing himself as a cabinetmaker in America was a difficult process, complicated by his initial inability to communicate in English. Gradually, he moved through positions that led to a joint venture with other craftsmen who opened a shop in New York to sell their individual work. For many years Russo was also forestman for the workshop of George Nakashima. Presently, he is retired from working for others but very busy with commissions for furniture. He hopes that his three-year-old grandson Gino will continue the family tradition.

**NORMA THOMAS**

Norma Thomas of Holsopple is a third generation quilter. She was born in Somerset County in 1927 and began learning from her mother at a very young age. She has been making quilts throughout her life, when not busy with her children or helping with the books for her husband's company. In recent years she has been active in the management for Self Help Crafts, a Mennonite mission store in Johnstown, which works with crafts artists from the Third World. Her materials vary, as she often works with whatever is available. She's not sure how long it takes her to make a quilt, but one of her daughters once estimated that it takes about 300 hours. Her reasons for practicing her art are many: she enjoys the challenge of creating, she finds the actual process of quilting fun, and the finished products provide material for the yearly mission quilt auction held by her Mennonite church.

The Mennonite Commission has allowed her to pass on much of her knowledge to her daughters, Sharon and Carol, who will accompany her at the festival.

**FRANK VALENTECH**

Sons of Mario Valente, a Croatian immigrant who came to southwestern Pennsylvania in 1913, Frank and his three brothers occupy a special place in the contemporary tradition in Pennsylvania. Not only do they play all five of the tamburinas or tambourines, but they make them as well. Frank is concerned that after his generation, there will be no more tamburina makers in America to contribute to the continuation of Croatian cultural traditions. "Some guys want to play real well, but you can't get them interested in making the instruments," he says.

The five instruments, from smallest to largest, are the tamburica—or brac—the tambor (both of which take the lead melody), the huzgor (which plays chords), and the tamburina or bass. Frank makes only the first four tamburina instruments, as the commercially available bass viol is now commonly used in place of the tamburina bass.

His instruments are made from maple (used in the outer body), spruce for the bracing and soundboard, and softer woods such as poplar for some of the inner structure. Many of his instruments contain mother-of-pearl inlaying to give them a distinctive appearance. He also adapts the standard machine head where the turning pegs are fastened with an extra curl or stroke as his special trademark.

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