



EXHIBITS
WORKSHOPS
COMPETITION
GALA CONCERT
GUEST ARTISTS
JR. & SR. FESTIVAL
ORCHESTRAS
LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT
PRESENTATION

AMERICAN ACCORDIONISTS' ASSOCIATION

85th Anniversary AAA Festival
July 12-16, 2023

MARRIOTT PHILADELPHIA WEST
111 CRAWFORD AVENUE
WEST CONSHOHOCKEN, PA 19428

SUBSCRIPTION - \$20



Welcome to the American Accordionists' Association 85th Anniversary Festival

Greetings, AAA members and festival attendees! It has been far too long since we have gathered together live, and I can't think of a better way to get reacquainted than here at the 2023 AAA festival as we celebrate 85 years!

We'll kick things off right away on Wednesday with exhibits, competitions, a workshop, and socializing during our Meet & Greet Reception.

Thursday will start off with two workshops and more competitions before we step out of the hotel to celebrate Accordion Day at the King of Prussia Mall (160 North Gulph Road in King of Prussia, PA). And when we return to the hotel in the afternoon, we'll have our first AAA Festival Orchestra rehearsal, soon followed by Pasta Night, with entertainment provided by AAA champion Mario Tacca, acclaimed vocalist Mary Mancini, and the Westmont Philharmonia Accordion Orchestra.

After doing some carbo-loading on Thursday night, get ready for a full Friday, thanks to more time in the Exhibit Room, a pair of morning workshops, and our Luncheon concert with entertainment provided by world champion Grayson Masefield, AAA Coupe Mondiale representative Nathan Chapeton, and the Westmont Accordion Club. Then follow all of that up with two more afternoon workshops, competitions, the second AAA Festival Orchestra rehearsal, and our Gala Concert featuring Grammy winner Joey Miskulin, world champion Grayson Masefield, AAA champion Mario Tacca, and the Accordion Pops Orchestra.

On Saturday, we'll start early with a workshop, competitions, another visit to the Exhibit Room, our awards concert, and the final AAA Festival Orchestra rehearsal. Then it's time to dress up for the Gala Banquet and enjoy the 2023 AAA Festival Orchestra conducted by world-class conductor Joan Cochran Sommers, The United States Air Force Strolling Strings, and the AAA Lifetime Achievement Award presentation to Frank Busso Sr.

During Sunday morning's breakfast and open meeting, we'll have a chance to recap the festival and gather your ideas for future AAA events and initiatives.

Finally, I invite you to become an AAA member for the first time or to renew your membership here at the festival. Your membership will help you stay up to date on accordion events and helps to fund AAA events and projects.

I look forward to connecting with you during the festival!

Very best musical wishes,

Frank Busso, Jr.
President
American Accordionists' Association

P.S. - Be sure to join us in Salon E each night for our After Hours Club! Bring your accordion if you'd like, or just come by to enjoy some camaraderie and good music.





Frank Busso, Jr., President
Frank Busso, Sr., 1st Vice-President
Sam Falcetti, 2nd Vice-President
Rita Davidson Barnea, Secretary
Ray Oreggia, Treasurer

GOVERNING BOARD

Manny Bobenrieth
Alex Chudolij
Dr. Joseph Ciccone
Beverly Roberts Curnow
Joanna Darrow
Kevin Friedrich
Donald Gerundo
Mitch Guido

Dominic Karcic
Emilio Magnotta
Dr. Robert Young McMahan
Edward Monteiro
Linda Soley Reed
Mario Tacca
Al Terzo
Frank Toscano

APPOINTMENTS

FESTIVAL CHAIRPERSON
Frank Busso, Jr.

ARTIST IN RESIDENCE
Mario Tacca

COMPTROLLER
Donald Gerundo

HISTORIAN
Joan Grauman Morse

PRESIDENT EMERITA
Faithe Deffner*

AFFILIATIONS

Confédération Internationale des Accordéonistes (CIA)
International Music Council (UNESCO)
National Music Council
A World of Accordions Museum

**deceased*



Mayor Danelle Fournier
West Conshohocken Borough
112 Ford St
West Conshohocken, PA 19428

Mayor Yaniv Aronson
Conshohocken Borough
400 Fayette St, Suite 200
Conshohocken, PA 19428

June 27, 2023

What a tremendous honor it is to welcome all of you to the American Accordionists' Association 85th Anniversary Festival. Thank you for choosing West Conshohocken to host this celebration, competition and festival, and no doubt, you will cross the Matsonford Bridge to venture into Conshohocken! You will find both boroughs to be welcoming, friendly and highly interested in the arts. In fact, the Conshohocken Arts Festival was started in 2018 to cater directly to residents' requests for expanded arts programming.

You are truly witnessing a marvel in both West Conshohocken and Conshohocken as two former Pennsylvania manufacturing towns have transformed into the vibrant, fun, lively boroughs that you will have the pleasure to explore during this festival. We are so thrilled to see that the AAA has thrived through 85 years in its mission to unite, educate and facilitate bringing people together to play, study and honor the accordion and the artists who play the accordion. A special congratulations as well to Frank Busso, Sr., on being awarded the AAA Lifetime Achievement Award!

We wish all of you the warmest welcome from our two boroughs. We will be a richer community for your visit, patronage, and friendship these next four days.

Sincerely,

Danelle Fournier
Mayor, West Conshohocken Borough

Yaniv Aronson
Mayor, Conshohocken Borough

AAA Lifetime Achievement Award



A personal message from
FRANK BUSSO, SR.

It is with profound gratitude that I accept the AAA Lifetime Achievement Award. This prestigious recognition is truly an honor and I extend my deepest appreciation to the American Accordionists' Association.

This award is the culmination of a lifelong journey filled with passion for the accordion. I have built a professional career creating and sharing music with others. My life has been enriched by each of my students, teachers, and musicians of all genres. I am grateful for your collaboration and friendship.

In this wonderful musical journey, I have been especially lucky to be joined by my family. When I began accordion performance as a solo competitor 65 years ago, I could hardly have imagined I would go on to take the stage alongside my children and now my grandchildren. And of course, my wife has been at my side, as my partner and audience member in chief. This shared family love for music brings me joy beyond measure.



As the AAA marks 85 years, I am delighted to celebrate with all of you as we recall the joys of past decades and imagine the bright future ahead.

Your friend and colleague in music,

Frank





the world's standard of accordion excellence



*We salute AAA's featured
TITANO artists and educators:
Frank Busso Sr., Nathan Chapeton,
Joanna Darrow, Dee Langley,
Grayson Masefield, & Joan Cochran Sommers!*

The rich history of Titano Accordions includes many important artists and educators who have developed and popularized these world-class accordions ...

◆ Bill Palmer ◆ Bill Hughes ◆ Joan Cochran Sommers ◆ Grayson Masefield ◆
Jeff Lisenby ◆ The "K" Trio ◆ The International Trio ◆ Helmi Harrington
◆ Kevin Friedrich ◆ The Busso Trio ◆ Mary Tokarski ◆ Harley Jones ◆ Bill Schimmel ◆

...just to name a few.



You've heard our music since 1934!

ernestdeffner.com • info@ernestdeffner.com
(703) 941-9300 • P.O. Box 11663 • Alexandria, VA 22312 USA





AMERICAN ACCORDIONISTS' ASSOCIATION

85th Anniversary Festival - July 12-16, 2023

Schedule of Events

Wednesday, July 12, 2023

3:00pm	Registration Desk opens (until 8:00pm)	Ballroom Foyer
3:30pm	Competitions	Academy Room
5:00pm	Workshop: Playing with Others, including Beginner Adult Band rehearsal by Dee Langley	Salon E
	Exhibit Room opens (until 9:00pm).....	Walnut Room
7:00pm	Meet and Greet	Ballroom Foyer
8:00pm	Reception (included with Festival Registration)	Salon D
9:00pm	After Hours Club - <i>bring your accordion!</i>	Salon E

Thursday, July 13, 2023

8:00am	Junior Festival Orchestra Rehearsal (until 9:00am)	Ballroom B
9:00am	Exhibit Room opens (until 11:30am).....	Walnut Room
	Registration Desk opens (until 11:30am)	Ballroom Foyer
9:30am	Workshop: The Indefatigable Elsie Bennett and the AAA Composers Commissioning Committee, by Dr. Robert Young McMahan	Salon E
	Competitions	Academy Room
10:30am	Workshop: Tips & Tricks for Successful Accordion Gigging, by "Papa Joe" De Clemente.....	Salon E
12:00pm	Accordion Day at the King of Prussia Mall (5 miles from the festival hotel)	
2:00pm	Exhibit Room reopens (until 3:30pm)	Walnut Room
	Registration Desk reopens (until 7:00pm)	Ballroom Foyer
3:30pm	Festival Orchestra Rehearsal #1 (until 5:30pm)	Ballroom B
7:00pm	Pasta Night and Entertainment (ticket required).....	Ballroom B
	<i>featuring AAA champion Mario Tacca, acclaimed vocalist Mary Mancini, and the Westmont Philharmonia Accordion Orchestra</i>	
9:00pm	After Hours Club - <i>bring your accordion!</i>	Salon E



AMERICAN ACCORDIONISTS' ASSOCIATION

85th Anniversary Festival - July 12-16, 2023

Schedule of Events

Friday, July 14, 2023

8:00am	Junior Festival Orchestra Rehearsal (until 9:00am)	Ballroom B
9:00am	Exhibit Room opens (until 11:30am).....	Walnut Room
	Registration Desk opens (until 11:30am)	Ballroom Foyer
	Workshop: Arranging Your Favorite Songs to Play with Accordion Friends by Dee Langley	Salon E
	Competitions	Academy Room
10:00am	Workshop: Eugene Ettore's Contributions to 85 Years of the AAA by Rita Davidson Barnea.....	Salon E
11:30am	Luncheon Concert (ticket required)	Ballroom B
	featuring world champion Grayson Masefield, AAA Coupe Mondiale representative Nathan Chapeton, and the Westmont Accordion Club	
1:30pm	Workshop: AAA Past, Present, and Future, by Frank Busso Sr.	Salon E
	Exhibit Room reopens (until 3:30pm)	Walnut Room
	Registration Desk reopens (until 6:30pm)	Ballroom Foyer
	Beginner Adult Band Rehearsal.....	Ballroom B
2:30pm	Workshop: Bellows and Articulation Control, by Grayson Masefield.....	Salon E
3:30pm	Festival Orchestra Rehearsal #2 (until 5:30pm)	Ballroom B
6:30pm	Gala Concert (ticket required).....	Ballroom B
	featuring AAA champion Mario Tacca, the Accordion Pops Orchestra Grammy winner Joey Miskulin, and world champion Grayson Masefield	
	Artist Reception immediately following concert (ticket required)	Salon D
9:00pm	After Hours Club - <i>bring your accordion!</i>	Salon E

Saturday, July 15, 2023

9:00am	Junior Festival Orchestra Rehearsal (until 10:00am)	Ballroom B
	Exhibit Room opens (until 11:30am).....	Walnut Room
	Registration Desk opens (until 11:30am)	Ballroom Foyer
10:00am	Workshop: Phrasing, Dynamics, & Musical Styles, by Joey Miskulin.....	Salon E
10:20am	Competitions	Academy Room
12:30pm	Awards Concert and Entertainment AAA.....	Ballroom B
	Exhibit Room reopens (until 3:30pm)	Walnut Room
	Registration Desk reopens (until 6:00pm)	Ballroom Foyer
3:30pm	Festival Orchestra Rehearsal #3 (until 5:30pm)	Ballroom B
6:00pm	Cocktail Reception.....	Ballroom Foyer
7:00pm	Gala Banquet (ticket required).....	Ballroom B
	featuring the 2023 AAA Festival Orchestra, The US Air Force Strolling Strings, and the AAA Lifetime Achievement Award presentation to Frank Busso, Sr.	
9:00pm	After Hours Club - <i>bring your accordion!</i> - will begin after Gala Banquet ends.....	Salon E

Sunday, July 16, 2023

9:00am	Breakfast (ticket required) and Open Meeting	Ballroom B
--------	--	------------



AMERICAN ACCORDIONISTS' ASSOCIATION

FOUNDED 1938



AAA FOUNDERS

Left to right, front row: Pietro Frosini, Abe Goldman, Sidney Dawson
Center row: Anthony Galla-Rini, Charles Magnante, Pietro Deiro Sr, Charles Nunzio
Back row: Gene von Hallberg, Joseph Biviano
Not pictured: John Gart, Sam Roland, Byron Strep

85 Years of American Accordionists' Association Presidents



1938-1939
Pietro Deiro, Sr.



1940-1941
Charles Magnante



1942-1945
Joseph Biviano



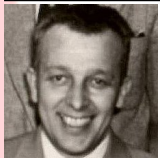
1946-1947
Eugene Ettore



1948-1949
Joseph Biviano



1950-1951
Charles Magnante



1952
Pietro Deiro, Jr.



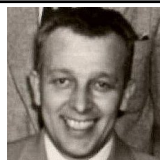
1953-1954
Eugene Ettore



1955-1956
Charles Magnante



1957-1958
Louis Iorio



1959-1960
Pietro Deiro, Jr.



1961-1962
Joseph Biviano



1963-1964
Eugene Ettore



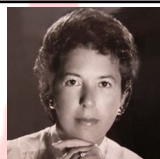
1965-1966
Carmen Carrozza



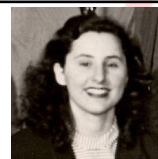
1967-1968
Joseph Biviano



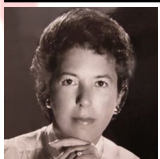
1969-1970
Charles Magnante



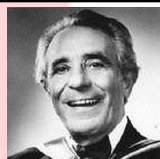
1971-1972
Maddalena Belfiore



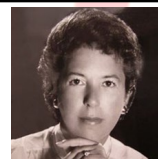
1973-1974
Elsie Bennett



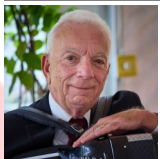
1975-1976
Maddalena Belfiore



1977-1978
Carmen Carrozza



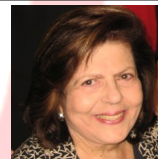
1979-1980
Maddalena Belfiore



1981
Frank Busso, Sr.



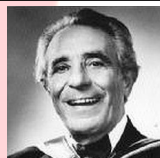
1982-1984
Addie Cere



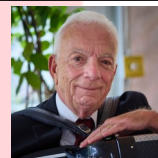
1985-1986
Faithe Deffner



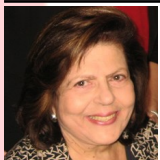
1987-1988
Anthony Ettore



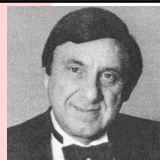
1989-1991
Carmen Carrozza



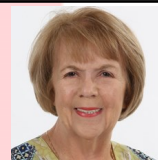
1992-1994
Frank Busso, Sr.



1995-2000
Faithe Deffner



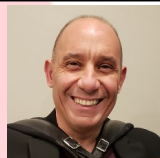
2001-2004
Dr. Carmelo Pino



2005-2014
Linda Soley Reed



2015-2018
Mary Tokarski



2019-2022
Dr. Joseph Ciccone



2023-present
Frank Busso, Jr.



85th Anniversary AAA Festival Competition Schedule

***Solo & Duet categories will be in the Academy Room
Ensemble & Band categories will be in Ballroom B***

ETHNIC SOLO ADULT

Friday, July 14 - 9:00am

Mike Silvia

EVALUATION DUET

Wednesday, July 12 - 3:30pm

Janine Lenguadoro & Michelle Reasso

EVALUATION SOLO A

Wednesday, July 12 - 3:40pm

Michelle Reasso

Janine Lenguadoro

Karen Blisnuk (A)

Dan Badecki

Kathy Haywood

Karen Blisnuk (B)

Bob Klatte

Lisa DeAngelis

EVALUATION SOLO B

Thursday, July 13 - 10:10am

Grace Wu

Ethan Davenport

Daniel Latch

EVALUATION SOLO C

Friday, July 14 - 10:10am

Francesca Busso

Iven Kavich

Julianna Busso

EVALUATION SOLO D

Saturday, July 14 - 10:20am

Gabe Abreu

Dan Riccio

Kaidson Davis (A)

Ava Yip

Judy Monro

Kaidson Davis (B)

FOUNDERS SOLO ADULT

Friday, July 14 - 10:00am

Mike Silvia

HONORS SOLO JUNIORETTE

Friday, July 14 - 9:10am

Iven Kavich

Julianna Busso

*Prize money for the Honors Categories has been generously donated by
The Mary and Frank Tokarski Musical Arts Fund*



85th Anniversary AAA Festival Competition Schedule

***Solo & Duet categories will be in the Academy Room
Ensemble & Band categories will be in Ballroom B***

HONORS SOLO JUNIOR

Thursday, July 13 - 9:30am

Maksim Liam Toft

Ava Yip

Caroline Lammers

HONORS SOLO INTERMEDIATE

Thursday, July 13 - 9:50am

Alexander Lammers

Max Hoffmann

OPEN SOLO JUNIORETTE

Saturday, July 15 - 11:00am

Julianna Busso

Iven Kavich

OPEN SOLO JUNIOR

Friday, July 14 - 9:25am

Caroline Lammers

Vladimir Maximilian Stefanik

OPEN SOLO INTERMEDIATE

Friday, July 14 - 9:40am

Max Hoffmann

Alexander Lammers

OPEN SOLO ADULT

Saturday, July 15 - 11:10am

Mike Silvia

POP SOLO JUNIORETTE

Saturday, July 15 - 11:20am

Francesca Busso

POP SOLO JUNIOR

Saturday, July 15 - 11:25am

Nicholas Busso

EVALUATION BAND

Thursday, July 13 - 9:15am

Acme Adult Preparatory Band
(Westmont, NJ)

ENTERTAINMENT AAA

Saturday, July 15 - 12:30pm

Busso Festival Orchestra
(Alexandria, VA)

*Congratulations and good
luck to all competitors!*



Meet your 2023-2024 AAA Executive Committee

President: Frank Busso Jr has served on the AAA board of directors since 2007 and as the organization's 2nd Vice President since 2021. He is the director of the Ernest Deffner Affiliates, whose brands include Titano, PANcordion, Pignini, Excelsior, Roland, and Hohner. Frank is the accordionist for The United States Air Force Band in Washington, DC and runs the Busso Music School in Alexandria, VA. He received a Bachelor of Science degree in business administration from Boston University, later serving as an instructor and arranger with the Boston University Athletic Bands. Frank studied accordion with Frank Busso Sr at the Staten Island Music School in New York, eventually becoming an instructor there, where his students earned many regional and national titles in competition.



1st Vice President: Frank Busso Sr has served on the governing board of the American Accordionists' Association for over 45 years. He has held the offices of President, First Vice President, Second Vice President, and Treasurer. Frank started studying and playing accordion at age 7. Since then, he has achieved great successes as a performer throughout the New York metropolitan area. As director of the Staten Island Music School in New York, Frank taught many award-winning students and conducted numerous classical & festival accordion orchestras. He was also the music teacher at two parochial schools for over 25 years. Currently a resident of northern Virginia and Palm Beach, Florida, Frank continues to perform and arrange orchestral works.



2nd Vice President: Sam Falcetti graduated from the University of Hartford with a degree in Theory & Composition. In the 70s and 80s, he was an adjunct professor at Westfield State University and Holyoke Community College, where he had an accordion ensemble that twice performed at Carnegie Hall. As a conductor, Sam's Springfield Accordion Orchestra was invited to perform at the World's Fair in Osaka, Japan and also toured Italy performing concerts. As an entrepreneur, he founded Falcetti Music, a 60-year eight-store music chain in both Massachusetts and Connecticut. Today, Sam is involved in teaching over 30 digital accordion players at Falcetti Music and online. He is also a Roland V-Accordion dealer and conducts the 20-member New England Digital Accordion Orchestra, performing at major events in Massachusetts and Connecticut. Sam is a past president and charter member of the Accordion Teachers Association of Massachusetts, an honorary member of the Massachusetts Accordion Association, and a past officer and member of the AAA since the 70s. In 2019, he was awarded the first International Scholar Award at the "IDEAS Symposium" in Ohio.



Secretary: Rita Davidson Barnea is an honors graduate of the University of Connecticut, having received a Bachelor of Science degree in Music Education, and has been a member of the AAA board for many years. For over 14 years, Rita has served as the national editor of accordionusa.com, covering accordion artists, concerts, and other events taking place in North America. She presents workshops and concerts on "The Life and Music of Eugene Ettore," "The Use of the Accordion in the Teaching of Music in School," and "How to Organize a Children's Birthday Party" centered around the use of the accordion. Rita has adjudicated for many accordion competitions over the years, and performed in concerts, for workshops, and at accordion festivals throughout the USA. She retired from a 30-year career as a public school music teacher in West Orange, New Jersey, where she used her accordion every day in the classroom and as an accompanist for concerts and programs. Rita is the creator and curator of the Eugene Ettore Memorial Website, which contains photos, articles, and other valuable information about Eugene Ettore, prominent accordionist and composer.



Treasurer: Ray Oreggia has been an American Accordionists' Association governing board member for several years and has served as the organization's Treasurer since 2017. He studied accordion under one of the AAA's founding members, Joe Biviano. Ray received a Bachelor of Science degree in Life Science from the New Institute of Technology. Over the years, he has performed at countless venues and with numerous ensembles and orchestras of varied instrumentation. Ray has been a strong supporter of the Long Island Accordion Alliance since its inception in 2010.



Ernest Deffner

Celebrating over 85 years!



Sheet Music & Method Books from:

Alfred ♦ Aretta ♦ Astier ♦ Deffner ♦ Galla-Rini ♦ Hal Leonard ♦ Hohner ♦ LaCroix ♦ Mel Bay
♦ Mosti ♦ Preissler ♦ Santorella ♦ Schmuelling ♦ Stricker ♦ *and others!*

Palmer-Hughes Books and Arrangements:

*Bach ♦ Band ♦ Christmas ♦ Free Bass ♦ Jazz ♦ Polka ♦ Rock ♦ Recital ♦ Sacred ♦ Solos
♦ Technical ♦ 8-Book Prep Course ♦ 10-Book Course ♦ and more!*



*World Class Accordion Design
Lightweight Acoustic Models
Digital and MIDI Instruments
Tuning/Refurbishing Services
MIDI and Pickup Installations
Accordion Recordings & DVDs
Sheet Music & Method Books
Amplifiers and Synthesizers
Straps, Parts & Accessories*



You've heard our music since 1934!

ernestdeffner.com · info@ernestdeffner.com
(703) 941-9300 · P.O. Box 11663 · Alexandria, VA 22312 USA





Meet your 85th Anniversary AAA Festival Guest Performers and Presenters

Frank Busso, Sr.: Workshop Presenter

Frank has served on the governing board of the American Accordionists' Association for over 45 years. He has held the offices of President, First Vice President, Second Vice President, and Treasurer. Frank started studying and playing accordion at age 7. Since then, he has achieved great successes as a performer throughout the New York metropolitan area. As director of the Staten Island Music School in New York, Frank taught many award-winning students and conducted numerous classical & festival accordion orchestras. He was also the music teacher at two parochial schools for over 25 years. Currently a resident of northern Virginia and Palm Beach, Florida, Frank continues to perform and arrange orchestral works. At this year's AAA Festival, he will become the twelfth recipient of the AAA Lifetime Achievement Award.



Nathan Chapeton: Luncheon Concert Performer



Nathan is a university student and musician who became interested in playing the accordion at the age of eight when he heard his teacher, Mary Tokarski perform in concert. He has appeared as a guest artist for many local musical organizations, including the Long Island Accordion Alliance, the Brooklyn Accordion Club, and as a frequent performer at Connecticut Accordion Association events. Nathan has earned the privilege of representing the United States-AAA at the Coupe Mondiale (World Accordion Championships) several times including in Russia, Austria, Lithuania, and China. Nathan was among participants from around the globe to perform at the 2018 First Honors Recital at Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall in New York City, where he performed Alexander Tcherepnin's "Partita." Nathan has also appeared as guest soloist with both the New Haven Symphony and the Hamden Symphony Orchestra in Connecticut.

Joanna Darrow: Conductor of AAA Junior Festival Orchestra, Westmont Philharmonia Accordion Orchestra, and Westmont Accordion Club

Joanna Arnold is the personal protégé of Stanley Darrow. During her studies at the Acme Accordion School, she covered all aspects of musical training, specializing in music of the Baroque period and chamber music. Joanna has studied with Guy Klucevsek, and also composition and analyses with Dr. E. Avril. Performing in conjunction with bassoon, harp, harpsichord, strings, and piano, she has brought the accordion to the attention of local professional musicians and to members of the Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra, for which she now serves as staff accordionist. Joanna is Director of the Westmont Philharmonia Accordion Orchestra and serves as a member of the Board of Directors of the AAA, Accordionists and Teachers Guild International (ATG), and A World of Accordions Museum. She has also been appointed adjunct accordion instructor for accordion majors at Rowan University in Glassboro, New Jersey.



Rita Davidson Barnea: Workshop Presenter



Rita is an honors graduate of the University of Connecticut, having received a Bachelor of Science degree in Music Education, and has been a member of the AAA board for many years. For over 14 years, Rita has served as the national editor of accordionusa.com, covering accordion artists, concerts, and other events taking place in North America. She presents workshops and concerts on "The Life and Music of Eugene Ettore," "The Use of the Accordion in the Teaching of Music in School," and "How to Organize a Children's Birthday Party" centered around the use of the accordion. Rita has adjudicated for many accordion competitions over the years, and performed in concerts, for workshops, and at accordion festivals throughout the USA. She retired from a 30-year career as a public school music teacher in West Orange, New Jersey, where she used her accordion every day in the classroom and as an accompanist for concerts and programs. Rita is the creator and curator of the Eugene Ettore Memorial Website, which contains photos, articles, and other valuable information about Eugene Ettore, prominent accordionist and composer.



Meet your 85th Anniversary AAA Festival Guest Performers and Presenters

“Papa Joe” De Clemente: Workshop Presenter

“Papa Joe” started playing the accordion in 1956 at the young age of nine. He was interested in playing because he used to visit his relatives, the Iorio’s, who manufactured accordions in New York City as far back as 1907. Joe has performed in numerous venues and loves to entertain people. He volunteers weekly to assist an elementary school music program at Public School 203Q in Bayside, Queens, which is one of the only elementary schools in New York City with a student accordion band. Joe shares: “To me, music has been a language that crosses all barriers, speaking to all people and bringing joy to those who listen. The box has been my pal for over 60 years and I am glad the Lord gave me this special gift.



Dee Langley: Workshop Presenter and Conductor of AAA Beginner Adult Band



Dee specializes in both solo and ensemble works for the accordion, having appeared with the Minnesota Orchestra, St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, Guthrie Theater, Nautilus Music Theater, Ethnic Dance Theatre, and Theater Latte Da. She won the 2012 Minnesota Emerging Composer Award (Orkestar Bez Ime - World Music), the 2011-2012 McKnight Fellowship for Performing Musicians. In 2019, Dee was honored at the American Accordion Musicological Society (AAMS) for her lifelong dedication and service to the accordion as a performer, educator, director, and composer. She was inducted into the American Accordion Hall of Fame in 2020. Founder and coordinator for the NE Accordion Festival, Dee is also a past president of the Accordionists and Teachers Guild International (ATG) and currently teaches accordion for Minneapolis College, as well as privately in NE Minneapolis.

Grayson Masefield: Gala Concert Performer, Luncheon Concert Performer, and Workshop Presenter

Born in Auckland, New Zealand, Grayson is the first person to win world championships in classical, virtuoso, and digital accordion categories. He is the Instrumental Music Teacher for Accordion at the University of Auckland and is the founder of AOTANGO. Grayson studied in France with Frederic Deschamps, earned a Master in Specialised Music Performance degree at HEMU Lausanne, Switzerland with Stephane Chapuis, and completed a Masters of Studio Pedagogy degree from the University of Auckland. He is regularly invited to adjudicate and/or appear as Guest Artist at international competitions he has previously won. At the 2010 Coupe Mondiale in Croatia, Grayson was elected to the prestigious CIA Music Committee and is currently its Vice-Chairman.



Grayson’s extensive repertoire, including concert works and entertainment selections, can be heard on his three albums and in many live performances available on YouTube. He has worked with several of the world's leading composers, such as Frank Angelis (France), Gorka Hermosa (Spain), Petri Makkonen (Finland), and Gary Daverne (New Zealand) to perform and record new original works for the accordion.

Dr. Robert Young McMahan: Workshop Presenter



Dr. McMahan is an accomplished accordionist and author, specializing in contemporary music, assisting composers, presenting workshops, and performing premieres of new accordion works. In recent times, he presented an educational workshop, "Radio Days Accordion: A Sampling of Once Popular Accordionist Composers of the Past and an Examination of their Music," which included accordion duet performances by Dr. McMahan and Albert Schlisserman of “The Rooster,” by Joe Biviano and “Allegro,” by Gene Von Hallberg. On the literary front, Dr. McMahan has written numerous articles, including an in-depth analysis of many of the works commissioned by the AAA's Composers Commissioning Committee. In addition, he wrote and collaborated with noted American composer and author of “The Study of Orchestration,” Samuel Adler, in creating the first entry ever of the accordion in the Keyboard Instruments chapter of the new 4th edition, published in 2016.



Meet your 85th Anniversary AAA Festival Guest Performers and Presenters

Joey Miskulin: Gala Concert Performer and Workshop Presenter

Joey is the first accordionist to be inducted into the Country Music Hall of Fame. His 2018 induction into the "Nashville Cats" is the highest accolade given to a very select few recording session musicians. The Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum's Nashville Cats series spotlights musicians and session singers who have played important roles in country music history, and his award ceremony highlighted the hundreds of albums he recorded with some of music's greatest names that, to date, resulted in over 100 million sold. The Garth Brooks album where Joey was featured using his PANcordion has reached over 50 million in sales! He is the tenth recipient of the AAA Lifetime Achievement Award.



Joey is extolled nationally as accordionist, arranger, spontaneous improviser, studio musician, pedagogue, and unequalled entertainer. In a music career spanning more than four decades, Joey has collaborated with a range of artists including Paul McCartney, John Denver, Ricky Skaggs, Andy Williams, Ricky Van Shelton, Emmylou Harris, Frankie Yankovic, Garth Brooks, and many others. Although principally known as a superb performer, his talents extend to many production credits that include Disney/Pixar in Toy Story, and recently in Shanghai, China, where he spent two weeks working with the Walt Disney Company.

Joey toured the United States with Frankie Yankovic as his featured accordionist for six years, writing and arranging songs between performances. In the 1990s, he joined Riders In The Sky, and with them is billed as "Joey the Cowpolka King." This wholesome Western-style group brings smiles, laughter, and excellent musicianship to every audience.

Joan Cochran Sommers: AAA Festival Orchestra Conductor



Joan was awarded the title of Professor Emerita upon her retirement from the University of Missouri - Kansas City Conservatory of Music, where she established and taught the accordion degree program for 40 years. She has arranged innumerable works for accordion orchestra over many years, often for the UMKC Accordion Orchestra, which, under her direction won more first prizes than any other American group. Joan taught numerous accordionists over many decades, many who went on to distinguish themselves as artists, competition winners, and music professionals.

In both 1955 and 1956, she earned the right to represent the USA in the Coupe Mondiale, and it was those experiences that opened her eyes to the tremendous opportunities available to accordionists; perhaps it also fixed her lifelong interest in worldwide accordion activities. Joan is the founder of the CIA World Accordion Orchestra, which has presented concerts and premieres in many countries around the world.

Joan has held positions in several music organizations, including the Accordionists and Teachers Guild International (ATG) and the Confédération Internationale des Accordéonistes (CIA-IMC-UNESCO), where after her retirement, she was unanimously awarded the status of CIA Honorary Member. Today she enjoys guest conducting accordion orchestras around the world, making new arrangements, and leading the UMKC Community Accordion Ensemble in frequent performances. She is the seventh recipient of the AAA's prestigious Lifetime Achievement Award.

Mario Tacca: Gala Concert Performer

Mario Tacca was born in Italy. During his childhood, his family moved to the Alsace Lorraine region of France, where he began his musical studies. This is where his love and intense desire to play the accordion began. He loved the sound! He would pick up the accordion and imitate some of the songs his mother used to sing. The desire and love never diminished, despite having to walk three miles weekly to his teacher with his instrument strapped to his back! While in France, he was the winner of many regional and national accordion competitions. He went on to become a world champion, winning the World Cup of Italy, the Grand Prix of Paris, the US National Competition, and the International Accordion competition held at Carnegie Hall in New York City. Always dazzling his audiences around the world, Mario is the eighth recipient of the AAA Lifetime Achievement Award.





Meet your 85th Anniversary AAA Festival Guest Performers and Presenters

Mario Tacca and Mary Mancini: Pasta Night Performers

Internationally acclaimed vocal artist Mary Mancini has been featured in the New York Times, the Fort Worth Star-Telegram, and the Journal News and has performed in a variety of venues around the world. Able to sing in eight different languages, Mary draws from a deep repertoire reservoir. She is adept at pop, showtunes, operatic arias, and sacred music and has received worldwide acclaim. Mary has headlined numerous concert halls and festivals in North America, Europe, and China, and has performed at the Garden State Arts Center, Resorts International Casino Hotel, Taj Mahal in Atlantic City, and Mohegan Sun Resort Casino in Connecticut.



Accordionist Mario Tacca is a multiple International and National Competition winner, a prolific composer, teacher, recording artist, and dedicated AAA governing board member for many years. As a duo, the husband-and-wife team have performed together for over 40 years, sometimes clocking up as many as 200 concerts in a season. Dynamic entertainers, they engage audiences with musical genres that span classical, pop, gospel, and traditional music from Italy and France. As a popular performing duo, Mary and Mario have completed two concert tours of China.

Accordion Pops Orchestra: Gala Concert Performers



The Accordion Pops Orchestra traces its roots to 1970 and its first director, Dr. Jacob Neupauer. After performing under well-known directors, including Eugene Ettore and Daniel Desiderio, the orchestra has performed under the baton of Al Terzo since 2011. With members from numerous states in the northeastern US, the orchestra consists entirely of accordions, complemented by percussion. The 30 members include professionals, teachers, and amateur musicians. The orchestra performs a repertoire taken from a wide range of musical categories, including Broadway, popular, movie themes, and light classical. It performs in concert halls, festivals, playhouses, clubs, churches, and retirement homes.

Conductor Al Terzo is a music teacher, arranger, and conductor. He has been a member of the orchestra since its inception in 1970. In addition to serving on the AAA governing board, Al is a member of the Music Teachers National Association, the New Jersey Music Teachers Association, and the National Association of Music Educators.

The United States Air Force Strolling Strings: Gala Banquet Performers

The Air Force Strings is the official string ensemble of the United States Air Force. Stationed in Washington, DC, it is one of six musical ensembles that form The US Air Force Band. The Air Force Strings consists of 16 active-duty musicians performing a wide range of musical styles, from classical symphonic selections and Broadway show tunes to classic rock, bluegrass, and patriotic. The ensemble often entertains audiences at high-level military and government events in a formation known as the Strolling Strings, which includes Senior Master Frank Busso Jr on accordion. Providing a multi-dimensional experience, the instrumentalists surround the audience and perform from memory.

The U.S. Air Force Band's mission is to HONOR those who have served, INSPIRE American citizens to heightened patriotism and service, and CONNECT with the global community on behalf of the US Air Force and the United States. The excellence demonstrated by the Air Force Strings reflects the excellence displayed by all



Airmen stationed worldwide, whose selfless service and sacrifices ensure the freedoms enjoyed by Americans today.

Visit the 2023 Exhibits ◆ Walnut Room ◆

*Shop for your next new accordion, browse accessories and music,
and learn more about 85 years of AAA history!*

Wednesday, July 12: 5:00pm to 9:00pm

Thursday, July 13: 9:00am to 11:30am

2:00pm to 3:30pm

Friday, July 14: 9:00am to 11:30am

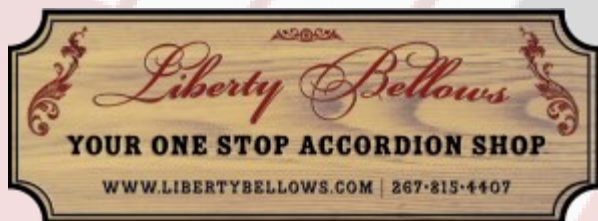
1:30pm to 3:30pm

Saturday, July 15: 9:00am to 11:30am

12:30pm to 3:30pm



*AAA
Archives*



Ernest Deffner
ernestdeffner.com



THE MOST RESPECTED NAME IN ACCORDIONS



For decades, Myron Floren was the accordionist for the Champagne Music Makers on the Lawrence Welk Show. His instrument of choice was the Baton Tone Chamber, manufactured by PANcordion. *We are now proud to honor this accordion icon with the limited edition...*

Myron Floren Commemorative Baton Tone Chamber

FEATURING THE SIGNATURE OF MYRON FLOREN

The most extensive musical range and versatility is yours to command in a tone chambered PANcordion Baton with superior handmade reeds. Choose from dry tuning, two sets of bassoon reeds for jazz, or three sets of middle reeds for musette!

MIDI and Sennheiser pickup kits also available.



A portion of each Commemorative Baton Tone Chamber purchase will be donated to the USO World Headquarters in honor of the selfless work performed by Myron Floren for this organization.

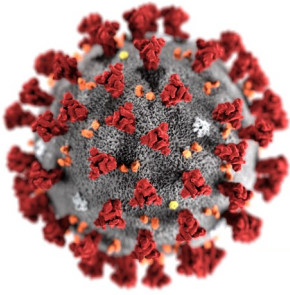


You've heard our music since 1934!

ernestdeffner.com · ernestdeffner@aol.com
(703) 941-9300 · P.O. Box 11663 · Alexandria, VA 22312 USA



Two Years of AAA Virtual Competitions



The pandemic led the AAA to find new ways to encourage accordionists of all ages to make music. Our 2021 and 2022 virtual competitions were organized by Mary Tokarski and Frank Busso Jr, respectively, with technical assistance provided by AAA member Mike Silvia. We could not have been more proud of our contestants!

Prize money for the 2021 and 2022 Honors Categories - and the live 2023 Honors Categories, too! - was generously donated by The Mary and Frank Tokarski Musical Arts Fund. This fund, established in 2018, was created by Mary Tokarski to honor her late husband Frank, who lovingly supported her music through the decades, and for her to give young people the ability to “experience the enrichment and the joy that comes from making music.” The AAA thanks Mary for this beautiful, ongoing legacy.

2021 Virtual Competition Results

Standard Solo Elementary
Mayah Brennan SILVER

Standard Solo Intermediate
Antoine Brennan GOLD

Open Solo Juniorette
Caroline Lammers GOLD
Francesca Busso SILVER
Julianna Busso SILVER

Open Solo Junior
Alexander Lammers GOLD

Open Solo Intermediate
Gia Ciccone GOLD

Open Solo Adult
Kaisu Lankinen SILVER
Pamela Tom SILVER

Ethnic Solo Intermediate
Gia Ciccone GOLD

Ethnic Solo Adult
Kaisu Lankinen GOLD
Michael Silvia GOLD

Pop Solo Juniorette
Caroline Lammers GOLD

Pop Solo Junior
Nicholas Busso SILVER

Pop Solo Adult
Pamela Tom SILVER

Jazz Solo Adult
Kaisu Lankinen GOLD

Entertainment AAA
Josie Beach SILVER

Honors Solo Juniorette
Caroline Lammers 1st

Honors Solo Junior
Alexander Lammers 1st

Honors Solo Intermediate
Gia Ciccone 1st
Max Hoffmann 2nd

Honors Solo Adult
Janice Lavoie 1st
Michael Silvia 2nd
Pamela Tom 3rd

Standard Duet Intermediate
Antoine Brennan and
Mayah Brennan GOLD

Open Duet Juniorette
Francesca Busso and
Julianna Busso GOLD

Open Duet Junior
Caroline Lammers and
Nicholas Busso GOLD

Open Duet Intermediate
Alexander Lammers and
Max Hoffmann GOLD

2022 Virtual Competition Results

Open Solo Juniorette
Francesca Busso GOLD
Julianna Busso GOLD
Iven Kavich SILVER
Nemanja Zivanovic GOLD

Open Solo Junior
Caroline Lammers GOLD

Open Solo Intermediate
Adam Fundak GOLD
Alexander Lammers SILVER

Open Solo Senior
Zach Grindle GOLD
Rowena Liu BRONZE

Open Solo Adult
Megumi Hada GOLD

Founder's Solo Intermediate
Adam Fundak SILVER

Pop Solo Junior
Nicholas Busso GOLD

Jazz Solo Senior
Zach Grindle SILVER

Honors Solo Juniorette
Julianna Busso 1st
Iven Kavich 2nd

Honors Solo Junior
Caroline Lammers 1st

Honors Solo Intermediate
Max Hoffmann 1st
Alexander Lammers 2nd

Open Duet Juniorette
Francesca Busso and
Julianna Busso GOLD

Open Mixed Duet
Julianna Busso (accordion) and
Patrick Hamilton (piano) GOLD



Mary & Frank Tokarski

2022 AAA Virtual Competition Contestants



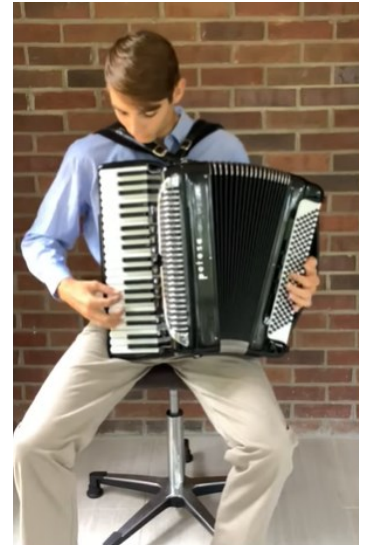
Caroline Lammers



Francesca Busso



Max Hoffmann



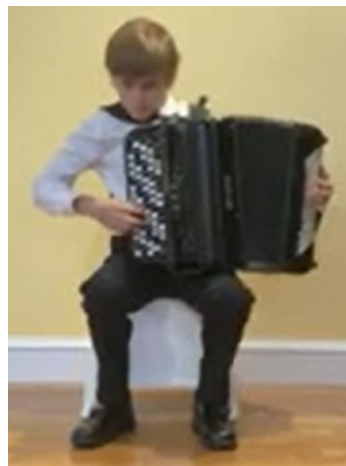
Adam Fundak



Nicholas Busso



Zach Grindle



Nemanja Zivanovic

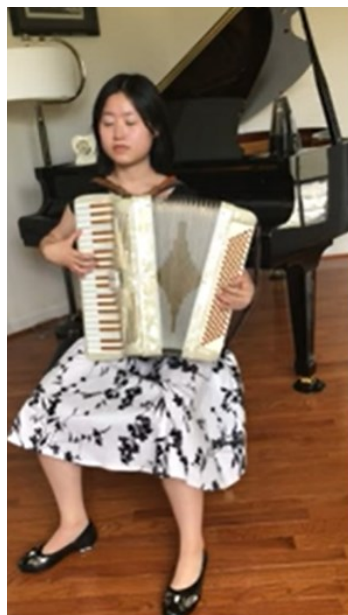


Patrick Hamilton and
Julianna Busso

Congratulations to all of our competitors and their teachers!



Megumi Hada



Rowena Liu



Alexander Lammers



Iven Kavich



2023 AAA Workshops

◆ *All workshops will be in Salon E* ◆



Wednesday, July 12 - 5:00pm

Playing with Others

Dee Langley, Presenter

We will focus on learning to gain the confidence to make music as a group. Play along with Dee as your skills come together to make a rewarding ensemble experience.

Part of this workshop will also serve as the first rehearsal of the 2023 AAA Beginner Adult Band, which may perform later in the festival. ***Bring your accordion!***



Thursday, July 13 - 9:30am

The Indefatigable Elsie Bennett & the AAA Composers Commissioning Committee

Dr. Robert Young McMahan, Presenter

For most of the second half of the 20th century, Elsie Bennett successfully convinced a who's who of famous

composers to produce much-needed concert works for accordion. We will open her vast photo albums, allowing the pictures on screen to guide us through her incalculable contributions to the classical accordion.



Thursday, July 13 - 10:30am

Tips & Tricks: Accordion Gigging

"Papa Joe" De Clemente, Presenter

Learn some of what it takes to find success as a working accordionist from a seasoned professional! Papa Joe will cover many of the basics, including being

prepared with the right equipment, showmanship fundamentals, advertising, filling your gig calendar, assorted genres, and connecting with your audience. There will even be a little singing! ***Bring your accordion!***



Friday, July 14 - 9:00am

Arranging Your Favorite Songs to Play with Accordion Friends

Dee Langley, Presenter

This hands-on workshop focuses on the basic concept of playing with others - melody, harmony, bass, and rhythm - to create your own ensemble arrangements of favorite songs. You will create an arrangement from a lead sheet and experience some of Dee's own arrangements. Sheet music will be available. ***Bring your accordion!***

Friday, July 14 - 10:00am

Eugene Ettore's Contributions to 85 Years of the AAA

Rita Davidson Barnea, Presenter

Learn about the music of a world-famous composer, accordionist, and educator, as Rita walks us through the chronology of Eugene Ettore's most important works, his three terms as AAA President, and his collaborations with other accordion giants in his mission to promote our favorite instrument.



Friday, July 14 - 1:30pm

AAA Past, Present, and Future

Frank Busso, Sr., Presenter

Hear the perspective of "growing up with the AAA" from the association's newest Lifetime Achievement Award recipient.

Frank will discuss how the AAA has evolved over the past several decades, and what might be in store as we look to the youth of America to help promote our beloved instrument.



Friday, July 14 - 2:30pm

Bellows and Articulation Control

Grayson Masefield, Presenter

Have you ever wondered what sets professionals apart from amateurs, and how to elevate your playing, even if you "just" play in your living room? World champion Grayson Masefield will shed some light on bellows techniques and other fundamentals to recognize potential improvements in your playing and to help those intangibles become more...well...tangible!



Saturday, July 15 - 10:00am

Phrasing, Dynamics, and Musical Styles

Joey Miskulin, Presenter

Playing selections in different styles will not only affect your individual selections, but also the feel of your entire performance. A legend who has played everything from polkas to jazz to showtunes and more, Grammy winner Joey Miskulin will call upon his decades of performing & production experience to help you explore phrasing and dynamics in your playing. ***Bring your accordion!***



AAA Membership

The AAA offers several membership tiers:

- Full/Professional
- Certified Teacher (Exam Required)
- Associate
- Affiliated Organization
- Student

Become an AAA member today!

ameraccord.com/information.php



Happy 85th, AAA!

You have been a huge part of my life since 1996. Sure wish I could celebrate with you now!

*Joan Grauman Morse,
AAA Historian*

Accordion Day at the King of Prussia Mall

Thursday, July 13 - 12:00-1:30pm

*Help us promote our beloved
instrument to the public!*

160 N. Gulph Rd. King of Prussia, PA 19406

~approximately 5 miles from the hotel~

The American Accordionists' Association celebrates 85 years!



What Events Led to the Formation of the American Accordionists' Association?

By: Joan Grauman Morse, AAA Historian

“When the musical history of our times comes to be written, one chapter will stand head and shoulders above all others in point of interest and importance, and that chapter will deal with the growth of the accordion movement during the last four years!”

—*Accordion News, October 1937*

When one reflects on the 1930s, two things immediately come to mind: the Great Depression and the emergence of the radio. By 1932, the radio dominated mass media throughout the industrial nations.

The piano accordion, still in its infancy, had been a huge hit in Vaudeville for many years. The accordions in the 1920s were filled with rhinestones and other ornamentation to “wow” the Vaudeville show audiences. When radio became the rage - a new, inexpensive form of entertainment at a time when money was scarce - Vaudeville simply died out.

The Vaudeville accordion stars were soon hired by the radio stations. By the late 1930s, one could hear accordions playing on the live radio programs all over the country. Many of the founders of the AAA performed weekly on the radio (these founders all worked in New York City):

- Charles Magnante: CBS, NBC - four programs weekly
- Pietro Frosini: WOR, “John Gambling’s Musical Clock” - daily except Sunday
- John Gart: WJZ - four programs weekly
- Joe Biviano: NBC, WOR, CBS - three programs weekly
- Charles Nunzio: WOR - three programs weekly

While long distance calls to other accordionists were pretty much unheard of, and long letters were few and far between, musicians from all over the US and Canada would meet annually in Chicago for the Music Trades Convention, where discussions on “everything accordion” would take place day and night. The performers and educators listed above were busy arranging music for the radio programs, plus they were teaching, performing outside of the studios, composing solos and band pieces for accordion, and writing accordion instruction books.

Yet, these five men, along with seven other giants in the music world (all from the New York City area) -- Pietro Deiro, Anthony Galla-Rini, Byron Strep, Sidney Dawson, Abe Goldman, Gene Von Hallberg, and Sam Rowland – were passionate about the new instrument they had grown to love and to master: the piano accordion. Sam Rowland, who had founded the American Drummers’ Association, suggested they form a new national organization for the accordion, headquartered in New York City. Thus, the American



Rhythm is supplied by the Henry George Orchestra. Left to right: Jack Shilkret, piano; Charles Magnante, accordion; Billy Carlino, banjo; Dave Boyd, trombone; Harry Salter, musical director; Joseph Andromaco, bass; Leo McConville, trumpet; George Green, xylophone; and Clyde Doerr, saxophone.

Accordionists' Association was established, holding its first meeting on March 9, 1938.

Why create this organization? The ideas were flowing and excitement was at an all-time high for the new instrument. "What can we do to make the accordion boom last?" was asked and discussed at each meeting. First on the agenda was to develop standards of notation for the bass in sheet music for the accordion. Up until this time, some composers wrote the basses in treble clef, some used full chords, some used numbers for chords, while others used letters, and so on. The AAA Standardized Notation, using one note for chords with letter designations, was created and was required for all accordion music printed in the US. The AAA founders, along with a rapidly growing group of new members, recognized the need for more original music for the accordion, better instruction and instructional manuals, and, most of all, they were determined to elevate the status of the piano accordion in the music world to that of a serious instrument.

The first AAA president, Pietro Deiro (known as the "Daddy of the Accordion") lectured and wrote articles for music publications such as *Metronome*, *Etude Magazine*, and the *Accordion World* for decades. Charles Magnante, Sidney Dawson, Anthony Galla-Rini, and Joe Biviano also wrote for these publications regularly with topics from "How to be a better radio accordionist" to "Accordions in public schools." Many excellent articles by these founders can be found in the aforementioned publications from the 1930s and early 1940s.

So many of the early pioneers in the AAA dedicated their entire lives to this instrument and worked tirelessly and passionately for the advancement of the



accordion. While many of the concerns we, in the AAA, have to this day about the acceptance and popularity of the instrument are the same as they were in the 1930s, one thing remains the same and likely always will: the versatile accordion is intensely loved and cherished by those who play it!



Original AAA Logo

"The American Accordionists' Association's aims and accomplishments, if itemized, would fill volumes but, suffice it to say that, since its beginning, it has been dedicated not only towards building a position for the accordion and the accordionist in the family of music and musical instruments, but in helping to further the musical culture of the world."

—Pietro Deiro, Jr., 1962

Pasta Night

Thursday, July 13 - 7:00pm

◆ *Ballroom B* ◆

Celebrating the AAA's 85th Anniversary!



*Mary
Mancini
and
Mario
Tacca*



*Westmont
Philharmonia
Accordion
Orchestra -
Joanna Darrow,
Conductor*

...and other entertainers!

Ticket Required



**American
Accordionists'
Association**
www.ameraccord.com



75 years!

Acme Accordion School

322 Haddon Ave.
Haddon Township, NJ 08108
856-281-4035

Founded 1948

Professional Faculty - Ensembles

Private and Class Instruction

Accordions - Accessories

Home of:

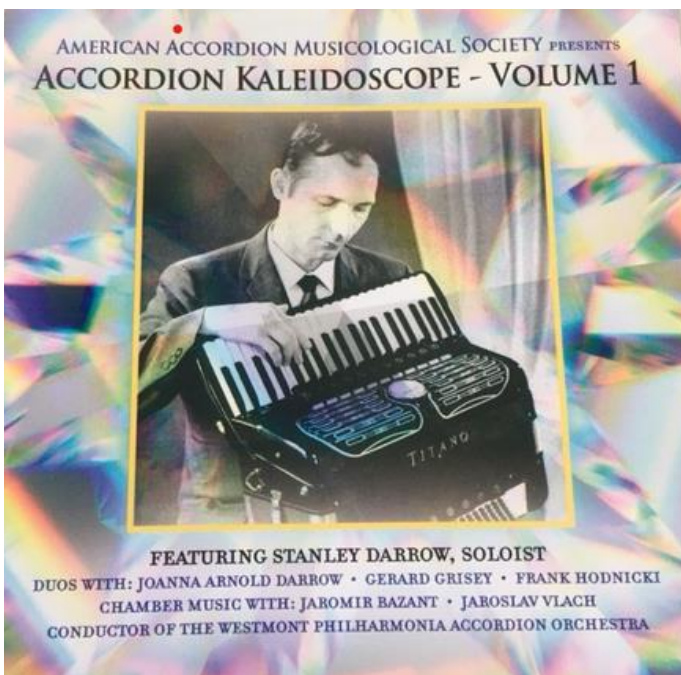
**American Accordion
Musicological Society**

**Westmont Philharmonia
Accordion Orchestra**

Westmont Accordion Club



AAMS Tribute CD to Stanley Darrow



**Balkan Fantasy Ukrainian Fantasy
Dance of the Winds and more.**

\$20. Includes shipping

**CDs available thru
Acme Accordion School
acmeaccordion@gmail.com
856-281-4035**

acmeaccordion@gmail.com

Luncheon Concert

Friday, July 14 - 11:30am

◆ *Ballroom B* ◆

Celebrating the AAA's 85th Anniversary!



*World
Champion
Grayson
Masefield*



*CIA
Representative
Nathan
Chapeton*



*Westmont
Accordion
Club -
Joanna
Darrow,
Conductor*

Ticket Required



**American
Accordionists'
Association**
www.ameraccord.com



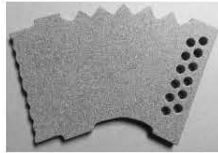
Unique accordion gifts

Clothing, jewelry, stationery, novelty items,
and much more!

Shirts & t-shirts



Corian trivets



AccordionGifts®

Bags



www.accordiongifts.com

dangrauman@gmail.com

301-806-5999

Caps



30% off ENTIRE STOCK!!

Offer expires Nov 15, 2023 – check availability before ordering

Pins & jewelry



Watches



Cards & note pads



Dan Grauman

COTATI ACCORDION FESTIVAL
CELEBRATING 32 YEARS
NON-PROFIT EVENT BENEFITING LOCAL YOUTH GROUPS

COTATI ACCORDION FESTIVAL

CORY PESATURO * TRACEY COLLINS * THOSE DARN ACCORDIONS
ERICA MANCINI * ELENA STENKINA * JENNY CONLEE

find more info at www.Cotatifest.com

SATURDAY & SUNDAY
AUGUST 19 & 20, 2023
9:30AM-8:00PM · LA PLAZA PARK, COTATI, CA

Paper Bellows * Carlos Mejia Godoy * Junk Parlor *
The Mad Maggies * Sourdough Slim * Hernandez Hideaway
... and so many more!



Mary Mancini

Internationally Acclaimed
Vocal Artist

Mario Tacca

World Renowned
Accordion Virtuoso



An Unmatched World Class Musical Duo!

♪ Cabaret Shows ♪ Concerts ♪ Special Events ♪

For more information about **Mary & Mario**, including a complete list of Performance Dates, CD's, and Mario's Books and Sheet Music, go to:
manciniandtacca.com

Contact us at: manciniandtacca@gmail.com

914-737-8872

P.O. Box 401, Crompond, NY 10517

*Congratulations to the
American Accordionists'
Association*

*for its
85th anniversary!*

Joe Cerrito

Gala Concert

Friday, July 14 - 6:30pm

◆ *Ballroom B* ◆

Celebrating the AAA's 85th Anniversary!



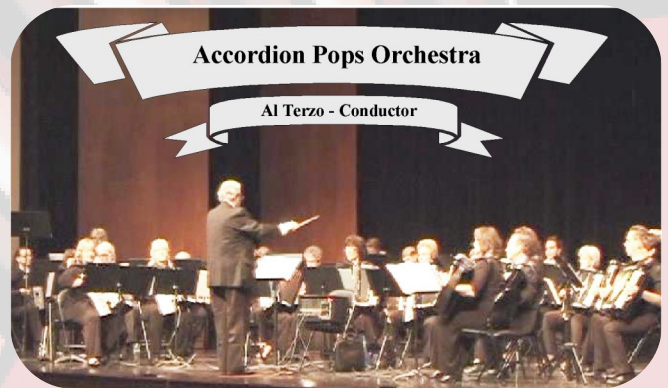
*Grammy
Winner
Joey
Miskulin*



*World
Champion
Grayson
Masefield*



*AAA
Champion
Mario
Tacca*



Accordions Pops Orchestra

Al Terzo - Conductor

Artist Reception in Salon D immediately following the concert!

Tickets required for Concert and Reception.



**American
Accordionists'
Association**
www.ameraccord.com





Accordionists & Teachers
Guild, International

The Accordionists and Teachers Guild, International (ATG)

congratulates the AAA
on 85 years of accordion excellence!

Best wishes for a wonderful performance of the
AAA Festival Orchestra
under the direction of Joan Cochran Sommers!

The ATG is pleased to announce that the
ATG Syllabus and Anthony Galla-Rini Tribute CD
are now for sale. Visit us online for these and
our other exciting activities!

www.atgaccordions.org



Accordionists & Teachers
Guild, International

2021

Syllabus of Examinations

Official Study & Examination Requirements For Accordion

ANTHONY GALLA-RINI

Concerto No. 1 in g minor
Karen Tremar, Robert Sattler, Jeff Cisenby
with the UMMC Accordion Orchestra
Joan Cochran Sommers - Conductor

Concerto No. 2 in e minor
Stas Venglevskij
with the Racine Symphony Orchestra
Pasquale Laurino - Conductor

Historical Collector's Edition Recording
Concerto No. 1 in g minor
Anthony Galla-Rini, 1941 World Premiere
with the Oklahoma City University Symphony
James Neilson - Conductor



available on-line at
www.atgaccordions.com

Awards Concert

Saturday, July 14 - 12:30pm

◆ *Ballroom B* ◆

Competition Prizes ◆ *Busso Festival Orchestra*

◆ *Junior Festival Orchestra* ◆

Included with your Festival Registration

Music Magic USA

Celebrating 26yrs of Squeezing & Pleasing!



When only superlatives are good enough!

G. Verde - Since 1893 Italy's oldest accordion maker, Finest quality, Patented bespoke models

Roland - America's 1st V-Accordion dealer – where experience & honesty matters!

Innovators – USA's first Internet dealer; Plus 2 hybrid; Polka Magic; The Angle; Axe-Cordion



MINI MAGIC World's Smallest 4-Ch accordion amp! 8"x12" 140W 12 lb



the boxtagon Most Powerful Battery Powered Amp
Amazing bass. 3-Ch/ 150W 18lb



G. Verde Super Street Show
Bespoke design, one-of-a-kind



Music Magic USA 973-883-0168 (NJ showroom)

www.MusicMagicUSA.com

alex.chudolij@gmail.com

Gala Banquet

Saturday, July 15

6:00pm Cocktail Reception

7:00pm Banquet

◆ *Ballroom B* ◆



*2023 AAA
Festival
Orchestra -
Joan Cochran
Sommers,
Conductor*



*The
United
States
Air Force
Strolling
Strings*



*AAA Lifetime
Achievement Award
Presentation to
Frank Busso, Sr.*

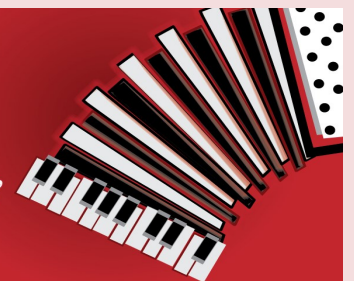
Ticket Required

Cocktail/Business Attire

Celebrating 85 years of the AAA!



**American
Accordionists'
Association**
www.ameraccord.com



New Directions for the Ongoing Historical and Analytical Series of Articles on the AAA's Commissioned Concert Works

Robert Young McMahan, DMA
Professor Emeritus, The College of New Jersey
AAA Composers Commissioning Committee Chairperson



It has been quite a while - four years, to be exact - since we last gathered in person for the much anticipated, uniquely eclectic, and always exciting annual mid-summer event the accordion world knows as the AAA Festival. During our difficult time of solitude, cautious mask-wearing and nervous coping with new “realities” in practically every aspect of daily life, many of our past patterns of thinking and acting changed to a considerable degree. This, my series on the history and analysis of the AAA's commissioned contemporary concert repertoire, was affected in certain ways as well by this upheaval of normalcy. This said, however, we often hope that change, pleasurable or not, will lead to something better, and I believe such did happen for this ongoing, multi-year project chronicling and examining the commissioned works and activities of the AAA's Composers Commissioning Committee, founded by Elsie Bennett in the mid-1950s.

To review, in 1997 I elected to launch a series of articles on the history and general analysis of every AAA commissioned work, starting with the first in 1957, Paul Creston's solo *Prelude and Dance*. These writings were to appear, one by one, every year in the annual AAA Festival's membership print publication *AAA Festival Journal*. And so they did across the next 21 years.

The first issue, in 1997, gave a brief (but soon to be greatly expanded) historical overview of the AAA Composers Commissioning Committee. The next 21 articles were spread across every year from 1998 through 2019, excepting 2007 when our organization was busy preparing to co-host the Coupe Mondiale in Alexandria, Virginia. Each one discussed one to four of the compositions, following the chronological order in which they were contracted by its chairlady. I decided to organize this string of writings in this way rather than by composer or style of composition to make the entire project a single ongoing history, delivered annually in serialized segments. As of my latest writing, which appeared in the 2019 issue of the *Journal*, I had reached the 34th and 35th commissions, the solos *Fables*, by William Schimmel, and *Scaramouche*, by John Franceschina, both of which were commissioned in 1974. Then came COVID.

Because of the pandemic, the Festival, along with the publication of its journal and hence this series of articles, reluctantly went dark for three years out of an abundance of caution. However, the lights are back on now, the 2023 Festival is in full swing, and the *Journal* is back in print, carrying with it the possibility of resuming this series of articles. Regarding the last point, however, and as alluded to at the beginning of this writing, some things have changed, and in my opinion not only for the better but in some ways by necessity as well. To explain, excluding for the moment the assumption and fervent hope that more compositions will be commissioned by the AAA in the near as well as ongoing future, there remains on the present list 27 existing ones I must revisit for historic and analytical expansion. Even if an average of two such compositions are featured in each annual article in the *Journal* starting now, the task would not be concluded until the year 2037.

Continued...

AAA Commissioned Works...continued

Considering all of the above and given that I am of a “mature” age, thus making it statistically chancy to assume that I will still be around and, if so, as active as I am presently near the end of this century’s third decade, things need to be sped up so that I can produce and publish more than just one article per annum. The obvious solution, of course, is for me to write numerous articles back-to-back, as time and circumstances allow in these, my retirement years, across each entire year. This procedure, in fact, is already underway and was put into action in August of the second “dark year,” 2021, but not initially for future articles but rather for the much-needed expansion of the past ones (to be described below). This action was set into motion largely by the prompting and generous support of Harley Jones, creator and head of the all-important international accordion organization and website, Accordions Worldwide (accordions.com), who felt they should go viral in the worldwide accordion community. Progress on this project has, in fact, been going very well, thanks largely to Harley’s generous contribution of countless hours spent gradually converting my texts into html format and putting them on the AAA website. Regular monthly reports on this ongoing project have been and will continue to be made in the Accordion USA section (accordionusa.com) of Accordions Worldwide. In addition, reports made prior to the current monthly issue may be easily found by clicking on “Previous News,” appearing in the opening banner of Accordion USA. As of this writing, I have completed expansions of 18 of the 22 articles, which will be discussed and described in detail below.



Harley Jones

My expansions of my past articles consist of 1) further historical research and reporting; 2) more extensive and detailed analyses of the works, including the new features of musical examples and occasional sound samples; and 3) additional photographs, most of which are from Elsie Bennett’s extensive personal collection portraying commissioned composers (as well as many she visited who turned down commissions) and associated accordion artists, with all of whom she usually posed, in various locations either at their homes or at special events that usually, but not always, involved the accordion. Elsie was quite a documenter in both print and visuals and is affectionately remembered by all who knew her as an almost compulsive shutterbug, taking countless photos of every event, accordion-related or not, she attended, and generously mailing copies to her subjects afterwards. (Though an able typist, Elsie never employed the computer or internet in her work.)

The reader might wonder from reading the above description of this project how a sound sample can work within a printed article on paper. The answer is quite simple: These expanded articles are not in that format, but rather are or will be online within the AAA website in a special section dedicated to the commissioned works. To read those that are already there, please visit ameraccord.com/aaacommissions.php. To read my articles on the commissioned works, please visit ameraccord.com/aaacommissions2.php, where you will see a page still in a state of development but allowing you to view the 22 articles in their various evolutionary stages.

In addition to the expanding list of articles on the AAA commissioned works, there is a second section on the articles page listing articles I have written regarding contemporary original works for or including accordion both inside and outside of the AAA and its repertoire.

So, with this switch from paper to electronic media, all future articles in my series will appear exclusively on the Music Commissions homepage of the AAA website where you will always be able to find them and all their predecessors. I will, however, contribute a small article in future *AAA Festival Journal* print issues regarding the work of the previous year and announcing any other pertinent news regarding activities pertaining to them and the Composers Commissioning Committee.

In the meantime, enjoy browsing the Composers Commissioning homepage and, I hope, reading the articles!

Continued...

AAA Commissioned Works...continued

In closing, the AAA can proudly count to date 62 works by a total of 38 composers who have produced one to four works each for our organization and artists over a period of 66 years. At least 17 of these composers are indisputably world renowned and will be found in every textbook on contemporary music; another 10 are highly respected, outstanding composers of less notoriety, but of high worth whose music is frequently performed and recorded; and many of the remaining numbers are classical-level accordionists of similar status who often hold advanced degrees in composition and high positions in academia and whose works for or including accordion as well as for other instruments and various ensembles have been widely performed, published, and recorded. It has been and continues to be my great pleasure and privilege to research and write about all these outstanding composers' and performers' work and their great contributions to the accordion's contemporary classical repertoire.



Elsie Bennett

It is my strong conviction that the release of these articles, recordings, and other CCC-related news and information from our accordion "village," large and international as it has gradually become over many decades, into the yet more diverse musical vastness of cyberspace in general will draw increasing attention from the classical music world at large, thus attracting more serious composers and concert venues to consider the accordion's possibilities and importance in contemporary music and for composers to write for it or include it in their instrumentation for chamber, orchestral, and operatic works (all of which has already happened to a considerable degree across the past century). These actions will also help to awaken many important and influential musical scholars who are major critics and authors to the rise of the accordion's presence in so many works by some of the most famous composers in the world (for example, Henry Cowell, Ernst Krenek, David Diamond, Samuel Adler, and Lukas Foss to name just a few among the AAA commissioned composers alone) to its growing significance and usefulness in these times.

For all the above reasons, the accordion has long deserved and by now certainly earned over its almost 200 years of technological evolution and ever growing inclusion in more and more advanced concert music the exalted status of what I like to term the "fourth keyboard instrument," fully deserving of joining in importance and usefulness its three historic predecessors, the piano, organ, and harpsichord, in their enormous contributions to the development and evolution of so many of the western world's musical masterpieces. All four have unique technical, timbral, and expressive qualities that lend themselves extremely well to music of all kinds, including that highest level we generally refer to as "classical." The AAA is among the earliest organizations to put into motion this upward climb of the accordion in advanced 20th and 21st century repertoire which now abounds in hundreds of solo, chamber, orchestral, and dramatic works for or including its presence worldwide. This is why its story must be often told and music for or including it widely and continuously created, published, publicized, promoted, disseminated, and frequently heard in both live and recorded performance. To these ends, the AAA is and has long been a tremendously important and deservedly proud and pioneering advocate and driver. May it long continue to be so and may my own small contributions to the movement, in addition to those of many others, past, present, and in the future, spur it on to many more and increasingly greater and more publicly heard successes.



Final idea and friendly request: I would like to propose that across this next year (and hopefully every year thereafter) accordionists anywhere in the world who have read this or previous articles in this series, or have not, but have heard from those who have and are interested in its cause to promote original contemporary concert music for our instrument, please report to me any performances they have given of AAA commissioned or other contemporary classical works for or including accordion so that I may list them in this annual journal and periodically online in *Accordions Worldwide*. The world needs to know! Send information or any comments you wish to make to mcmahan@tcnj.edu. Grateful thanks.

Works Commissioned by the American Accordionists' Association - 1957-2021

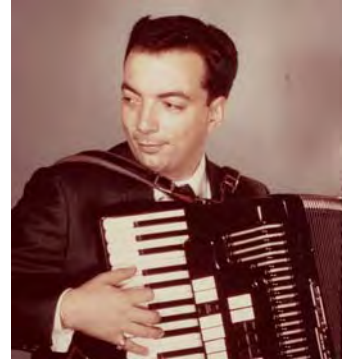
Composer	Music (with publication or completion dates)	Publisher
Adler, Samuel	Canto XVIII (2009)	Ludwig Masters
Bakasa, Robert	Accordion Sonata (1998)	Theodore Presser
Bennett, Robert Russell	Four Nocturnes (1960)	Chappell & Co.
Bennett, Robert Russell	Quintet (Psychiatry), for Accordion and String Quartet (ca. 1963)	Chappell & Co.
Biviano, Joseph	Quintet in G, for Accordion and String Quartet (n.p., n.d., ca. 1986)	Rental Only
Brant, Henry	Sky Forest, for Four Accordions (1962)	O. Pagani & Bro.
Brickman, Joel	Prelude and Caprice (1973)	Pietro Deiro Publications
Cowell, Henry	Concerto Brevis, for Accordion and Orchestra (1962)	Pietro Deiro Publications
Cowell, Henry	Iridescent Rondo (1960)	Pietro Deiro Publications
Creston, Paul	Concerto for Accordion and Orchestra or Band (1960)	Ricordi Music/Ernest Deffner
Creston, Paul	Embryo Suite (1968)	Pietro Deiro Publications
Creston, Paul	Fantasy for Accordion and Orchestra, or as solo (1966)	Mills Publishing Co.
Creston, Paul	Prelude and Dance (1957)	Pietro Deiro Publications
Davidson, Roger	Tango Blues, for Flute, Viola, Cello, & Accordion (2010)	Ernest Deffner Publications
Diamond, David	Night Music, for Accordion and String Quartet (1966)	Southern Music
Diamond, David	Introduction & Dance (1967)	Southern Music
Diamond, David	Sonatina (1966)	Southern Music
Flagello, Nicholas	Introduction and Scherzo (1964)	Pietro Deiro Publications
Foss, Lukas	Curriculum Vitae (1978)	Pembroke
Foss, Lukas	Triologue, for Violin, Cello, and Accordion (n.p., n.d., ca. 2003)	
Franceschina, John	Concerto for Accordion and Orchestra (1987)	Ernest Deffner Publications
Franceschina, John	For Elsie (2004)	
Franceschina, John	Scaramouche (1975)	Pietro Deiro Publications
Fremar, Karen	Introduction & Allegro for Accordion and Synthesized Tape (1976)	Ernest Deffner Publications
Fremar, Karen	Herricks Road, for Accordion and Percussion (2009)	Ernest Deffner Publications
Friedman, Gary William	Accordion Samba for Vocalist, Bassoon, Cello and Accordion (1997)	150 Music
Gordon, Louis	Aria, Scherzo and Finale for Accordion and Orchestra or Band (1962)	Pietro Deiro Publications
Halac, Jose	Accordion Shadow for Accordion, Flute and Percussion (n.d., 1993?)	Ernest Deffner Publications
Holshouser, Will	Redbud Winter, for B-flat Trumpet & Accordion, with alt. versions for B-flat Clarinet & Accordion, and 2 Accordions (2021)	
Katehis, George	Become/Desiccated (2017)	katehis-music.com
Kleinsinger, George	Prelude and Sarabande (1963)	Pietro Deiro Publications
Klucevsek, Guy	Three Tributes (2016)	Guy Klucevsek
Krenek, Ernst	Toccata (1964)	O. Pagani & Bro.
Lockwood, Normand	Sonata Fantasia (1965)	O. Pagani & Bro.
Luening, Otto	Rondo (1961)	Pietro Deiro Publications
McMahan, Robert Young	Apparitions, for Flute (alt. Piccolo) and Accordion (1996)	Ernest Deffner Publications
McMahan, Robert Young	Incantations, for Cello and Accordion (1995)	Ernest Deffner Publications
Natoli, Joseph	Child's Play, for 2 Accordions, Cello & Percussion (2019)	JANPress
Natoli, Joseph	Sonata in F Major (in the Classical Style) (2018)	JANPress
Oliveros, Pauline	Shape Shifting (1995)	Ernest Deffner Publications
Pisk, Paul	Adagio & Rondo Concertante, for Two Accordions & Orchestra (1962?)	Alfred Music
Pisk, Paul	Salute to Juan (1961)	Alfred Music
Riegger, Wallingford	Cooper Square (1958)	Pietro Deiro Publications
Schimmel, William	Fables (1975)	Ernest Deffner Publications
Schimmel, William	Remembering a Legend: Charles Magnante (n.d., 1987?)	Ernest Deffner Publications
Schimmel, William	The Spring Street Ritual (1979)	Ernest Deffner Publications
Schimmel, William	Variations in Search of a Theme (n.d., 1976?)	Ernest Deffner Publications
Siegmeister, Elie	Improvisation, Ballad and Dance (1962)	Sam Fox Publications
Serebrier, Jose	Danza Ritual (1967)	O. Pagani & Bro.
Serebrier, Jose	Passacaglia and Perpetuum Mobile, for Accordion, Strings, Brass and Percussion (1974)	Peer International Publications
Soldier, Dave	Sontag in Sarajevo, for Accordion, Melody, Chordal, and Bass Instruments, and Drums (n.d., 1993?)	Ernest Deffner Publications
Still, William Grant	Aria (1960)	Sam Fox Publications
Still, William Grant	Lilt (1967)	Pietro Deiro Publications
Surinach, Carlos	Prelude to the Sea (1965)	Alfred Music
Surinach, Carlos	Pavana and Rondo (1959)	Alfred Music/Ernest Deffner
Tcherepnin, Alexander	Invention (1968)	O. Pagani & Bro.
Tcherepnin, Alexander	Partita (1962)	O. Pagani & Bro.
Tcherepnin, Alexander	Tzigane (1968)	Pietro Deiro Publications
Thompson, Timothy	Growth Cells (n.d., 1977?)	Ernest Deffner Publications
Thompson, Timothy	Keyworld (n.d., 1977?)	Ernest Deffner Publications
Thompson, Timothy	Rossiniland (n.d., 1977?)	Ernest Deffner Publications
Thomson, Virgil	Lamentations (1960)	Pietro Deiro Publications

Most Pagani and Deiro titles available from Ernest Deffner Publications

AAA Congratulates Lifetime Achievement Award Recipient Frank Busso, Sr.

**SPOTLIGHT on Frank Busso, Sr. – musician, educator,
conductor and ambassador of the accordion**

*By Joan Grauman, AAA Historian
written in 2017, updated in 2023*



It is always difficult for me to find just the right opening words for my articles to set the tone I want to convey. This article was no different –until I received these beautifully expressed words of love and admiration from Frank’s daughter, Christina Busso:

“My dad is my hero and, through the eyes of this adoring daughter, he is larger than life!



Christina and Frank, Jr. with
competition trophies

At some point, you realize that playing the accordion is a somewhat remarkable thing. But for me, growing up, I simply didn’t know anyone who didn’t play the accordion! It started with my dad as a role model, of course, and then extended to my uncles, family friends and scores of students in and out of the music school. It was therefore natural for me to begin taking lessons when I was four, and I was always so proud to be part of the music school. I loved when I was old enough to join the orchestra and so excited to have my dad as my conductor.

As my dad was also the music teacher at two schools in our area, it was not uncommon for me to hear in the local grocery store, ‘Ohhh, you’re MR. BUSSO’S daughter!?!’ That was music to my ears. I could not have been prouder.

Now that I have my own children, I wasn’t sure whether they would share the same love for music, and love for the accordion. Apparently, it must be in the genes! Alex (nine years old) has been playing since he was five, and Caroline (five years old) started lessons at age four. Nothing makes me happier than to see and hear them practice and to play alongside my dad, my brother, or me. Truly, it is a family affair.

When my brother first started conducting his own orchestra a few years ago, to some it may have seemed like a passing of the baton, but it was also him picking up his own melody. I recall in the first orchestra piece my brother conducted, I played alongside my dad and followed the lead of my brother, and watched my mother, my husband and our children in the audience. Somewhere in the middle of the piece, I nearly lost my place as I teared up.

Playing the accordion isn’t a hobby – it is something that ties our family together across THREE generations – WOW.”

And all of this because Frank’s childhood home was too small for the piano that his mom had dreamed her son would learn to play. But there was room for an accordion, and the rest is history, and quite a delightful story of hard work, dedication and love that continues to this day.

Frank's Childhood

Frank, the only child of Constantino and Jeanette (Rapino) Busso, was born on Staten Island, New York in 1943. Tragically, his father died in World War II on the USS Ticonderoga in 1945, when Frank was just two years old. After his father's death, he and his mother moved into a three-room flat with Frank's grandparents.

When Frank was seven, he began taking accordion lessons from Prof. Omero Castellucci. An excellent European-trained accordionist, Castellucci encouraged young Frank to practice daily, and invited him to join his band. This band consisted of all instruments plus vocalists and met weekly above the local police station. They regularly put on shows for the community. Castellucci was also a composer. He composed and directed the world premiere of his opera, "The Prince of Peace" in 1955 at the Sailors Snug Harbor auditorium in Staten Island. Renowned musicians and singers performed in the orchestra and chorus... and one accordion player. So impressed with his 12 year old student's abilities, Castellucci wrote a solo part for Frank, which he performed in that world premiere.

Frank's mother remarried when Frank was seven years old, and they eventually moved to another section of Staten Island. It became difficult for Frank to get across town for his lessons, so when he was 14, his stepfather found him a new accordion teacher: Tony Ettore.



Frank, 1963 AAA US Senior A, 1st place winner

The Ettore School of Music was filled with "the sound of music", and Frank really enjoyed being there. Encouraged to enter competitions, Frank took 1st place two years in a row in his elementary school's music contest, and he won the American Accordionists' Association (AAA) US Senior A Solo Competition in 1963 at the age of 20. From 1959 to 1965, Frank won numerous national, regional and state accordion championships. The national and regional competitions were sponsored by the AAA, while the state championships were sponsored by the New York State Accordion Association.

With Tony Ettore's guidance, Frank started teaching at the Ettore School of Music at the age of 18 and soon had many private students. He also conducted ensembles and bands at the school.

Early on, Frank knew that his life would revolve around the accordion. He loved to play and bring joy to others through his music. At 13, he began performing for church groups and playing club dates in hotels including the Statler Hilton and the Biltmore. He also really enjoyed teaching, arranging and conducting. When he was 32 years old, Frank started his own band, "Rendezvous", which performed all over the NY metropolitan area for decades. But this was just a small part of Frank's activities and accomplishments.

While playing out several nights a week, Frank completed his college education. He holds a BS in Business from St. Peter's College and an MBA from Wagner College. This background helped him when he opened a music center, "Music City", which he eventually expanded to four locations in Staten Island. While running these stores, teaching accordion and playing club dates, Frank also

found time to meet, court and marry his lifetime partner, Carmela (Felitti) in 1975. And how did they meet? Through Carmela's brother, Gerald – an accordionist!

Carmela enjoys reminiscing about their first days together. *“Frank and I started dating and as is true to this day, he always chose fine dining restaurants. After several evenings, I remember going home and telling my mother, ‘It’s like dating a movie star!’ Due to his years of performing/entertaining and his music stores (Music City), he was well-known on Staten Island. People would come over to chat as well as simply point to him and whisper, loudly, ‘That’s Frank Busso!’ I am still proud to be his date!”*



Frank and Carmela's wedding, 1975

New Ventures and Faithe Deffner's Influence

Faithe Deffner took a liking to Frank early on in his career. Faithe was highly respected for her fierce lifelong dedication to the accordion, the manufacturing of fine instruments, as well as her tireless involvement in the AAA and the international accordion scene. She admired Frank's energetic and successful efforts with his students, as well as his work ethic. Faithe also felt that he shared her desire to heighten interest in the accordion throughout the country at a time when the accordion's popularity was beginning to wane. Frank and Carmela took a tremendous liking to Faithe, and a close friendship blossomed which lasted until Faithe's passing in 2014.



Staten Island Accordion Orchestra takes 1st place in AAA orchestra competition, 1976 in Washington, DC



Frank accepts 1st place trophy from Carmen Carrozza and prize money from Maddalena Belfiore, 1976



Cake celebrating the victory



Carmela and Frank Busso with Faithe Deffner, 1990

Faithe's influence in Frank's professional life was immeasurable. In 1975 he owned and managed four music centers. "I wanted to get out of the business at this point in my life", Frank said. Faithe stepped in and, insisting that Frank was just what the young students and the accordion world needed, sent him to Les Ray in Florida to learn how to manage an accordion school. Frank returned to Staten Island, closed his four businesses and opened the "**Staten Island Music School**" in 1977. He and Carmela purchased a building on Main Street in Great Kills. The music studio was on the first floor and they lived upstairs. With Faithe's encouragement, Frank created a very successful

school which, at one time, had 175 accordion students. He sold accordions, his students and the bands repeatedly brought home trophies, and pretty soon he was teaching his own two children, as well.

Carmela speaks of those early years. *“Christina and Frank, Jr. were both born in the same house where Frank gave music lessons and rehearsed his accordion bands. They were involved in attending and participating in at least three accordion festivals/competitions annually. As a result, I think they believed that everyone played the accordion! They learned to walk, talk and play the accordion.”*

Christina and Frank, Jr. loved their lessons with their father, and they loved being part of the music school’s bands and orchestra. Both children were encouraged to learn other instruments. Christina played the flute and Frank, Jr. played the trumpet. Frank wrote arrangements that featured each of his children on these instruments in the accordion orchestra. It was delightful watching these young teens removing their accordions to begin their solos.



Christina on flute and Frank, Jr. on trumpet as Frank conducts the Staten Island Showband. AAA Festival 1996, Philadelphia



Staten Island Showband, US Championship, Springfield, MA 1975

Peter Tripi began taking lessons from Frank in the late 1970s.

He was 12 years old when he began and he never left. He has been performing in the Busso Orchestras and Showbands for close to 40 years! One of his favorite performances of the Busso Music Showband was at the 2017 AAA Festival in Princeton, New Jersey, where Peter was as the band’s vocalist. He still plays his accordion as well. Peter spoke glowingly of his teacher and friend. *“Mr. B. was a very inspiring teacher. He taught us lifelong lessons such as how to work with others. He set a great example for all of his students.”*

Frank became the President of the Affiliated Accordionists of New York in 1971 and, with Faithe’s encouragement and recommendation, became a member of the AAA Governing Board in 1973. He has been a member of the Governing Board for 45 years.

AAA Governing Board Positions

Frank has faithfully served the AAA as Treasurer, Vice President, President (1981, 1992-94) and also chaired many committees including the national festivals and the Young Artists Concert Series. He has held the position of the Comptroller of the AAA for many years.

Lana Gore, Frank Busso and former AAA President, Linda Soley Reed, were all born in the same year. These three



Playing duets with Tony Dannon, AAA Festival's Gala Concert, Cleveland, 2001

'comrades' joyfully met each year at all of the AAA competitions and festivals since they were teens. Linda reflects on these memories:



AAA Tribute to Willard Palmer, Houston, TX 1995. L to R: Sam Falcetti, Pietro Deiro, Jr., Mary Tokarski, August Arruda, Jr., Faithe Deffner, Lana Gore, Maddalena Belfiore, Linda Soley Reed (back), Elsie Bennett, Frank Busso. Seated in front: Willard Palmer

“I have known Frank, or I should say have known OF Frank, since I was eleven years old and attended my first AAA competition. Held at the Charles Evans Hughes High School in New York City, the competition for the eleven year olds had over 40 contestants. Fourteen of them came from my studio in Connecticut, but the 1st place winner was some ‘kid from Staten Island’ – Frank Busso. And there was another one who was always there: the ‘kid from Detroit’. That was Lana Gore. There were no 4th place ribbons or ties, and certainly no ‘attaboy’ awards for just showing up. At 16, I finally won that coveted 1st place solo trophy, but the ‘kid from Staten Island’ wasn’t there!!

The three of us baby boomers, Frank, Lana and Linda, became united again as adults, each with our own students competing and orchestras to conduct. And then we got involved with organizing events: Accordion Day, Eastern Cup, Summer Competitions and this became our lives. Encouraged by both Maddalena Belfiore and Faithe Deffner, we were soon AAA Governing Board members (Frank and I), then officers and committee chairs.

We were not only ‘accordion friends’ but real life friends, attending each others’ ‘special’ birthdays, weddings, etc. Frank was so helpful to me when I realized that the accordion students started to dwindle and I decided to add a retail outlet to my then struggling teaching business. I drove down to Staten Island after teaching to pick up instruments and merchandise. We would go to dinner and talk about upcoming events and ideas for entertainment at each. We both held various offices in the AAA, but Frank was the one who got me through ten years of the Presidency of AAA. I would call him and say, ‘What do you think of this...?’, and in an instant he would give me all the pros and cons needed. I treasure his friendship and wisdom and hope this bond will continue for many years to come.”

In addition to his many Board positions, the AAA festivals have benefitted from his years as Public Relations Chair, Festival Coordinator, Hotel Liaison, Conductor of the Massed Band and Conductor of the Festival Orchestra.



Conducting the AAA Massed Band, Cleveland, OH, 2001



Frank conducting in the 1970s

Music Teacher at three Parochial Schools on Staten Island

When Frank's daughter Christina was quite young, she recommended her dad when an organist was needed for a school production. Although he is not an organist, Frank played the organ for the event. Impressed with his abilities and his rapport with young children, Frank was asked to take over the music classes at the school. Frank accepted and was soon teaching 600 elementary school students at two parochial schools. A few years later, he was asked to teach 7th and 8th grade music students at a third school, and he accepted. Frank taught for a total of 27 years at these schools, while continuing to teach private accordion students and direct his bands and orchestras.

The Busso Trio and More

Impressed with Frank's children's abilities and their joyful "performance personas", Faithe Deffner suggested that Frank, with his children, create a performing trio with two piano accordions and a bass accordion. "The Busso Trio" was created and made its debut at the 2001 AAA Festival in Cleveland, Ohio to a very delighted audience. The trio still plays together as often as possible. Christina, married to Marshall Lammers, is now a mother of two and a lawyer working as the Executive Director of the Trial Lawyers Association of Washington, DC. She is delighted that her two children are study accordion with her brother Frank. Master Sergeant Frank Busso, Jr., now the accordionist with the



"The Busso Trio", Frank, Jr., Christina and Frank



Uncle Frank teaches Christina's children, Alexander and Caroline Lammers

US Air Force Strolling Strings, also owns and operates Busso Music, Inc. and Ernest Deffner, Inc. in Alexandria, Virginia. Frank Jr.'s oldest child, Nicholas, now twelve, started accordion lessons with his dad at five years old and his younger sisters, Francesca and Julianna, now 9, have



Proud parents with Technical Sergeant Frank Busso, Jr. at the 2008 AAA Festival

been studying since 2020. Hopefully we will be treated to a performance by "The Busso Octet" in the near future!

Frank, Jr., while busy with his young children and his two full-time jobs, is pleased to earn a living with the instrument that has meant so much to him his entire life. He attributes so much of what he has accomplished – and enjoys – to his father's influence. *"I'm the first-call concert announcer for the Air Force Strings, and that's probably the case because I watched and learned from my father*

...serving as the master of ceremonies for countless concerts, recitals and award ceremonies.” He also spoke about his outlook on his work versus that of many of his colleagues: “Having the opportunity to work with so many accomplished musicians, I’ve had colleagues who now look at music as their job, and they don’t really get the same level of enjoyment out of performing as they did when they were younger. Just recently, I asked my father what motivates him, even after all these decades of performing, to take out the accordion to play for family holidays and engagements. Without hesitating, he said, ‘To make people happy’.”



Busso Music Showband performing at the 2016 AAA Festival in Buffalo, NY. Father, daughter, grandson with son, Frank, Jr., conducting

Frank and Carmela retired and moved to Virginia in 2015 to be close to their children and grandchildren, and they winter in Florida. Of course, the accordion still plays a major role in their daily lives no matter where they hang their hats. *“I am proud to be the sister, wife, mother and grandmother of accordionists!”*, Carmela beamed. Because of Frank’s influence and the example he set, all of the Bussos are so proud to be a part of the accordion world, and the accordion world is very blessed to have the Bussos!

The popular, award-winning Showband is still going strong and is now under the direction of Frank, Jr. What a joy it is to watch father and daughter, along with many fine accordionists, play on stage as son Frank conducts the orchestra that his father founded so many years ago. At the last AAA Festival in Buffalo, New York, an extra special treat was seeing Christina’s then eight year old son, Alexander, come up on stage for a duet with his friend as the orchestra accompanied them.



The Busso grandchildren with Frank and Carmela: (L to R) Caroline Lammers, Julianna Busso, Alex Lammers, Nicholas Busso, Francesca Busso, 2022

American Accordionists’ Association Lifetime Achievement Award Recipients

- 2002 - Carmen Carrozza - Cortlandt, NY
 - 2003 - Dick Contino - Wood-Ridge, NJ
 - 2004 - Charles Nunzio - Wood-Ridge, NJ
 - 2005 - Tony Dannon - Dearborn, MI
 - 2006 - Frank Marocco - Wood Ridge, NJ
 - 2009 - Faithe Deffner - New York, NY
 - 2012 - Joan Sommers - Charleston, SC
 - 2016 - Mario Tacca - Cortlandt, NY
 - 2018 - Lou Coppola - Alexandria, VA
 - 2019 - Joey Miskulin - College Point, NY
 - 2021 - Linda Soley Reed - Virtual Presentation
 - 2023 - Frank Busso., Sr. - West Conshohocken, PA
-



AAA Membership Application
AMERICAN ACCORDIONISTS' ASSOCIATION
 Frank Busso, Jr., President

Website: ameraccord.com

email: ameraccord1938@gmail.com

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

MEMBERSHIP TYPE *: FULL-\$65 CERTIFIED TEACHER - \$65 (exam required) ASSOCIATE - \$35 STUDENT - \$20
 AFFILIATED ORGANIZATION (send request to ameraccord1938@gmail.com)

Items designated with * are required

FIRST NAME * MI

LAST NAME *

ADDRESS *

CITY *

STATE / PROVINCE * POSTAL CODE *

COUNTRY *

TELEPHONE NUMBER *

EMAIL

If paying by credit card, please complete the information below

VISA MASTERCARD DISCOVER Expires (MM/YY) * / 3 digit code *

AMEX Expires (MM/YY) * / 4 digit code *

If paying by check (US currency only), please make it payable to **American Accordionists' Association**



Please mail to:

Rita Davidson Barnea
AAA Secretary
211 Clarcken Drive
West Orange, NJ 07052

The American Accordionists' Association is a 501(c)(3) corporation. All contributions are tax deductible to the extent of the law

AMERICAN ACCORDIONISTS' ASSOCIATION



The American Accordionists' Association is a non-profit organization founded in 1938 for the following purposes and objectives:

- To provide the media and public with information to stimulate an increasing awareness of, knowledge about, and appreciation for the accordion;
- To promote unity within the accordion community by encouraging cooperation among members and with their organizations which work on behalf of the instrument;
- To set and maintain high standards for those interested in the accordion, thereby working to facilitate and coordinate the various segments of the accordion world;
- To increase the number of people playing and studying the accordion, with a particular emphasis on young people;
- To honor achievement throughout the accordion community;
- To organize, sponsor, and support competition for accordionists at all levels and dispense scholarships and/or honors to those who distinguish themselves through outstanding performance;
- To organize, sponsor, and support workshops, advancing educational standards and artistic levels of accordion enthusiasts;
- To promote communication among segments of the accordion world; and
- To assist all accordion-related organizations with a forum for discussion of matters affecting the accordion in particular, and music in general, both nationally and internationally.

AN ORGANIZATION OF ACCORDION ENTHUSIASTS: PROFESSIONALS, TEACHERS, STUDENTS, AND HOBBYISTS

Members receive publications of worldwide accordion news and special rates for a variety of accordion functions and accordion-related items.

ameraccord.com