

AMAN Alumni Reunion

50th ANNIVERSARY

NEWSLETTER
SPRING 2013

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Start the
Celebration
NOW...



with **Clementine, Nevenka and Tanza**

An Alumni Benefit Concert and Old Style Coffee House Folk Dance Party • Saturday, June 1st, 2013

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Let's Get This Party Started!

Saturday, June 1st
An Alumni Benefit Concert
and
Old Style Coffee House
Folk Dance Party
with...



These wonderful **AMAN** alums are donating their performances to help fund scholarships for (in need) alumni so that everyone can make it to our reunion.

Clementine will play a rousing set of original and traditional (joined by **Nevenka**) American songs. **Nevenka** will sing and play a set of Balkan and Eastern European songs. Special Guest Performers **Billy Burke's Tanza** kids (the Millikan Middle School Ethnic Dance Troupe) will perform three AMAN-tribute dances: Tunsian, a Bulgarian Suite and Canopy dance. And we will round out the evening with Billy spinning oldies but goodies for folk dancing (dances popular in AMAN's heyday). Snacks and beverages will be provided for all those hungry folk dancers!

Come out and help us launch a very special **AMAN** Year!

EVERYONE WELCOME!

June 1st, 2013, 7:30pm at Millikan Middle School, Burrill Hall Theatre

5041 Sunnyslope Avenue, Sherman Oaks, CA 91423 [\[Click for Map\]](#)

—\$20.00 at the door—



An AMAN Amuse-Bouche

- Tasty Tidbits from the Reunion Event Coordinators
- Panels, Workshops, Jams, Songs and Dances
- Who's coming and what we'll all be doing

What actually is this Reunion thing anyway? Let us begin to roll it out for you with an appetizing assortment of event details.



CALENDAR OVERVIEW from Susie Burke

*Three nights/two days of activities and events
will roughly break down as follows:*

Thursday October 10th

Early morning is set up for staff and volunteers (if interested, anyone is welcome to jump in and

help decorate, set up the memorabilia & photos, etc.). Registration and schmoozing starts at 3:30pm, then everyone is on their own "out and about town" for dinner between 6-8pm. Back at the hotel from 8:00pm-midnight is our "Welcome KAFANA" social mixer in the San Jacinto Room with live music, performances, announcements, skits, trivia, dancing. REGISTRATION continues in the Santa Rosa room with vendors and AMAN displays. A great kick-off to our weekend!

>>>

>>> **Friday October 11th**

Friday's morning schedule starts off early at 8am for yoga and Pilates warm-ups. Then it's off to an exciting start with African drumming & dance, Hungarian tanz and the long anticipated Ladarke workshops for singers and band members alike.

Lunchtime Friday is a no-host outdoor grill, salad bar and Tamburitza serenade and singalong.

Afternoon is dedicated to the two "AMAN thru the Decades" panel discussions, a Black Sea dance session and a Podravina wedding suite review.

Then a much needed schmoozy happy hour and buffet dinner out on the patio under the trees and twinkling lights.

Afterwards, it's into the ballroom for our evening Dance Party with live music and a few surprise performances and fun skits along the way. Expect to see the things we do in the daytime sessions to make an appearance at some point during the evening program.

Then overlapping seamlessly, we move into our late night Kafana hours with more AMAN tomfoolery. Ahhhh...bedtime is still a long way off.

>>> **Saturday October 12th**

Saturday's morning schedule starts a bit later at 9am with Zumba Gold (low-impact) to get our blood flowing again, and Shape Note singing for the less adventurous. Then Mr. Jerry Duke himself will lead us thru a Big Circle Dance review, while the musicians have their own jam session of American music. Next up for those wanting to keep moving is a review of Samarkand and the swaying hips of the Tunisian camel walk. And next door our much anticipated 3rd panel discussion on "AMAN and the early Balkan music scene". We have a lot of experience and talent that will be sitting in on this discussion...it's sure to be one of the highlights of the weekend.

Okay...so now comes the breather; everyone

gets 5 hours of downtime...go have lunch, take a nap, indulge in a spa treatment or manicure, go shopping or sightseeing in Palm Springs, sit and schmooze more with friends...it's your free time, do what you will with it!! 5:30pm brings us back together, all dressed up for the more formal happy hour, where you will have an opportunity to get your official 50th Anniversary picture taken (all part of the package).

Then into our 50th Anniversary Award Banquet, where we will be honoring our Founding Artistic Directors Anthony Shay and the late Leona Wood, and other key Artistic Directors from over AMAN's history: Barry Glass, the late Dick Crum, Miamon Miller and the late Don Sparks. We will also pay tribute to



numerous other key people who have been influential in AMAN's history. More on this banquet will be forthcoming in the summer Newsletter this July. But suffice it to say, it will be an elegant tribute to

all of us—and an “evening to remember.”

Directly following the banquet, we will all meet up in the foyer (where the acoustics are fantastic) to have our much anticipated Ladarke sing/play along (need I say more?). Then into the evening dance party with live music and overlapping late night Kafana. What a day!!

>>> **Sunday October 13th:**

Alumni volunteers will be needed to help clean up, in the wee hours on Sunday and then again in the morning before noon. Then there is talk, though no official confirmation as yet, that there will be a Survivors Lunch at a local restaurant for people on our way out of town. More on this closer to the event.

Phew! Can't wait.

Hope to see you there.

Susie

>>>

THE WORKSHOP AND PANEL REPORT

from Paula Davis

AMAN Tribute Sessions

Friday and Saturday Mornings at the reunion will feature tribute dance, song and music jams and workshops:

- ***A Tribute to Philip Harland*** African Drumming Jam with a Sohu dance review
- ***Hungarian Tanz*** with Deanne Hendricks and friends
- ***Ladarke Vocal Workshop & Review*** with Susie Burke and friends
- ***Ladarke Tamburica Jam*** with Mark Forry and friends
- ***Black Sea*** (we hope with Ahmet Luleci! Time to commit, dude!)
- ***Shapenotes*** with Deanne Hendricks and John Gresham
- ***Podravina Dances*** with Billy Burke
- ***Appalachian Big Circle Dance*** with Jerry Duke and friends
- ***Appalachian Music Jam*** with John Zeretzke and friends
- ***Samarkand & Tunisian*** with Mardi Rollow and friends

Also an ***AMAN Songbook Singalong***, ***Middle Eastern Jam***, ***Zumba Gold!*** with Nina Edelstein, ***Morning Yoga*** with Jennifer Brosious and weather permitting (it *is* Palm Springs after all), ***Aquatic Shaker Service in the Pool*** with Mother Ann

AMAN Panels

We hope that these discussions will be an enlightening, fun and joyful walk down memory lane... bumpy roads and all! *Please note that the panelists and 1st row contributor names listed below are the ones who accepted our invitations by press time. Others are considering, and we expect many more to be involved by event time.*

- ***AMAN Through the Decades #1 (early 60s-1982)***
 Anthony Shay Keynote Speaker, Billy Burke Moderator
 With Panelists Sharon Johnson, Ergun Tamer, Samira Tamer
 and 1st Row Contributors Chris Yeseta, David Shochat, Mardi Rollow, Fred Allen
- ***AMAN Through the Decades #2 (1982-2002)***
 Barry Glass Keynote Speaker, Ronda Berkeley Moderator
 With Panelists Deanne Hendricks, Neil Siegel, John Zeretske, Anthony Biedul
 and 1st Row Contributors Mardi Rollow, Robyn Friend
- ***AMAN and the early Balkan Music Scene***
 Stewart Mennin Keynote Speaker, Miamon Miller Moderator
 With Panelists Mark Forry, David Golber, Loretta Kelly, David Shochat.
 and 1st Row Contributors Trudy Israel, Chris Yeseta, Neil Siegel

More event details to come!
 Thanks, Paula

>>>

>>>

THE MUSIC REPORT from John Zeretzke

We are pleased to announce the first wave of alumni musicians who have committed to coming and playing for our reunion celebration. Some will also be helping to coordinate and lead the different bands for our evening dance parties and sets of listening music throughout the weekend: **Stuart Brotman, Bill Cope, Mark Forry, Loretta Kelley, Jim Knight, Stewart Mennin, Dave Owens, Ian Price, Dan Ratkovich, Neil Siegel and John Zeretzke.**

Of course it is no surprise, musicians are, typically, hard to pin down so many months in advance. But we've had good responses from people so far, and expect to see more names added to this list as the energy picks up and we get closer to the weekend reunion.

If you are a musician and would like to play (but have not yet been contacted) please let us know, we'd love to have you participate! Contact John Zeretzke at zworlmusic@yahoo.com

Thanks everyone, see you at the reunion!
JZ

REGISTER NOW FOR THE REUNION ACTIVITIES!

Event Cost for 3 Nights / 2 Days— \$295

REGISTER NOW for the Activities, Dinners and Dances on the AMAN REUNION WEBSITE <http://aman50.com/registration.php>

- **WE ARE ACCEPTING DEPOSITS NOW!!**
- **FINAL PAYMENTS due by SEPTEMBER 6, 2013**
- **And DON'T FORGET to BOOK YOUR ROOMS**
- **The RESERVATION LINE is OPEN**

UPDATE: The hotel is telling us that some room types are already selling out... so please don't wait, book your rooms NOW! You'll definitely want to be staying in the heart of all the action with the rest of us!

Call the Renaissance Marriott **888-682-1238**

Click [HERE](#) for the *NEW Hotel On-line Reservation link*

AMAN's 50th Anniversary Celebration
Thursday October 10th – Sunday October 13th, 2013
Columbus Day Weekend
Renaissance Marriott
Palm Springs, California USA

Fakelore—True (and Tall) Tales from the AMAN Storybook: Adventures in Romania and Tunisia

Romania

by Miamon Miller

Sometime in what I believe was 1972, I was at Dave Owens apartment in West Los Angeles listening to a recording given him in his capacity as “wind” orchestra director (i.e., Balkan but non-tamburitza). The music was Romanian and it accompanied a dance called “briul” that was being choreographed by dance ethnologist, Dick Crum. At that point, I knew next to nothing about Romanian



folk music and had never heard of Dick. I joined AMAN in '70 and in truth, the only Balkan folk music I knew about was what I heard and played in the company where the repertoire was concentrated in Yugoslavia, Bulgaria and Greece and countries in the Middle East. Romania was new musical territory. Dick's recording of brîul music was top-heavy with violins and since that's the instrument I played, I volunteered to write a chart and teach it to the band, thus instantly becoming Romanian music director.

Fast-forward to early summer 1973 and many things had changed. I was a grad student in ethnomusicology at UCLA, had just gotten married to AMAN dancer Dayle Ulbricht and had been given an AMAN scholarship to help defray travel expenses for a summer research trip to the Balkans: heady stuff coming fast and furious.

At that time, I was most interested in tamburitza music (both American and Yugoslav); Romanian folklore was really secondary so the plan was to first go to Yugoslavia and then travel to Romania. Aside from the logistics, the major hurdle was acquiring foreign language skills. I had never been good at that

but it couldn't be avoided so I immersed myself in “Teach Yourself Serbo-Croatian” and learned barely enough grammar and vocabulary to ask simple questions and understand simple answers. There was no time to learn any Romanian beyond being able to say ‘yes’ which thankfully was the same word in Serbo-Croatian.

Thus armed, we flew to Germany, bought a very used VW bug and drove

to Zagreb arriving in time for the Smotra festival. What an experience! Zagreb is a wonderful city and the festival was spectacular. An array of groups representing various regions of Yugoslavia and those from neighboring countries performed night after night on outdoor stages. I recorded everything possible on a cassette recorder and tried to keep careful notes.

One group in particular stood out, a Romanian ensemble from the town of Vrșac in Serbian Banat. The music was beautiful and combined what I thought of as both Romanian and Serbian elements. Plus, there was a musician playing violin, holding the instrument at an angle 90 degrees from the norm. At a distance, it looked like he was playing rhythm and chords. I had never seen anything like it but it was cool.

Smotra was intoxicating and it was hard to sleep—no doubt abetted by the discovery of turska café. However, we planned a week in Novi Sad and finally tore ourselves away from Zagreb, traveling via Belgrade—a memorable stretch of highway littered with the visible evidence of unsafe driving. I had learned from Chris Yeseta and Ricky Schneider that >>>

>>> Novi Sad was the mecca of tamburica with the best orchestra led by one Janika Balaž and consequently couldn't wait to get there.

We brought a tent to save money on accommodations and there were camping spots in a Novi Sad park so we settled in for nearly a week. It was a fortuitous location because there was an outdoor grill-restaurant that opened in the evening and every night a great tamburica band played led by a violinist with other musicians playing braćs, bass, kontra and čelo. We developed a daily routine where we would go into the city and explore, check out bands in restaurants and be amazed at the bat population that came streaming out of church towers at sunset, but night after night we'd return in time to see "our" tamburica band. They played many of the songs we knew but also several that we had never heard. Two of those in particular caught our fancy: U Novom Sadu and Dunave. I recorded them at every opportunity and they gave us an autographed band photo: a treasured item.

After Novi Sad, it was time to go to the uncharted land of Romania. We gave ourselves about 3-4 weeks to tour the country and find what we could find. Needless to say, 40 years later it's a bit of a blur. Luckily, although we were there during the reign of Nicolae Ceaușescu, it was just before he instituted draconian measures limiting contact with foreigners. Consequently, people weren't afraid to invite strangers from America into their homes. We met folks from all over the country. In Tulcea, a port city on the edge of the Danube delta, we stayed with a Pomak woman (Bulgarian muslim) who was taken with Dayle's kaval playing. We met a group of farmers from a Transylvanian village who were partying adjacent to our camping spot where more beer was consumed by fewer people than I thought possible. They invited us to a wedding in their town the following day where we sat at tables and contributed to the tip pot for musicians, one of whom was playing a bass with two strings that looked like they were fashioned from barbed wire fencing. On another occasion in a different area of the country, we found ourselves in a Roma (Gypsy) village where the women dressed Dayle in their clothing and were somewhat upset when we decided not to make a purchase. Additionally, I found that if you needed tire repair, you should look for a shop that had a

sign saying "Vulcan" (by the way, tubeless tires were an unknown entity).

Towards the end of our trip, we found ourselves in a park in the city of Baia Mare (Maramureș, Transylvania) on Romanian independence day. There was drinking and music everywhere but the instrumental ensembles were different than what I had come to expect in that they featured a violin and guitar. Although the guitar had 4 strings and it was being held at an odd angle, it was a guitar, no denying. I had neither seen nor heard of it being used in Romanian folk music so I was intrigued and bought all the records I could find.

We left Romania and limped back to Germany for the flight home. The VW was losing compression in one cylinder and I didn't want to figure out the Romanian vocabulary necessary to deal with it.

The trip was fantastic as I had never been to any part of Eastern Europe or the Balkans and I was immensely grateful to AMAN for the opportunity.



Speaking of AMAN, upon return I prevailed upon Chris to learn the rhythm/harmonic violin (contra) seen during the Smotra festival and also to bang mercilessly on the guitar Maramureș-style where one chord fits all. We played a tune learned from one of the LPs I purchased, *Învîrtita din Apșa*, and later recorded it for the listening record. It was recently made available to AMANites as a download.

The trip rearranged my academic focus as I was more and more intrigued by the violin/guitar band. Three years later, I went back to Romania on a Fulbright grant for a year's worth of research into that genre, a trip that also benefitted AMAN repertoire as it was foundational for two suites (*Oaș* and *Crihalma*).

Tunisia

by Mardi Rollow

Before I joined AMAN, I spent two years as a Peace Corps volunteer in a small town in Tunisia. There was no public entertainment—and *no TVs!*—in the town; people entertained themselves. I often spent my evenings with a family that lived out in the olive groves. We did a lot of talking. When everyone felt festive, there was singing and dancing. One of the kids would start drumming on a table, and someone might sing a song. Family members would urge the younger daughter Naziha to dance. After she danced, they would get someone else up. If we were lucky, Yalla Ergaya, the mother, who was a good dancer, would be persuaded to dance. One of these times, a neighbor woman was visiting with her daughter who wasn't yet walking; when her mother urged her to dance, she swayed her hips just like the older girls!

They urged me to dance, too, and were pleased when they saw that I was interested in learning how. With their encouragement, I danced with them, following their suggestions and imitating their movements.

About a year after I returned home from Tunisia, I auditioned for AMAN. When Leona and Gloria

Rock asked about my dance background, they found out about my experiences in Tunisia, and asked me to demonstrate what I had learned. I tried to explain what the Tunisian drum rhythm was, and although they didn't quite get it right, I was able to show them what I knew. Leona was very excited; she hadn't seen this style before.

A few years later, Leona persuaded me to apply for an AMAN grant to film and record the folk music and dance in North Africa. I got the grant and went to Tunisia and Morocco. While there, I filmed people dancing at home and at festivals. In Tunisia, I saw a dancer who danced with a jar balanced on her head, and was entranced.

After I returned to the US, I worked on learning the new moves I had seen and filmed. I also wanted to learn how to dance balancing a jar on my head. I didn't have a jar, so I found a plastic vase close to the size and shape at a florist supply shop, glued a terracotta plant saucer upside down to the bottom and weighted it so that it would be more or less like a real Tunisian water jar.

I started dancing around the room with the jar. This was not that hard for Tunisian women to do >>>

Tunisian girls dancing at home



An old woman who was playing the drum for them (you can see my microphone in the foreground)

Some girls dressed me up in traditional Tunisian clothes



>>> because they routinely balanced water jars on their head when going to and coming from the well. But when I tried, invariably the jar would gradually creep until it was on my forehead or near my ear.

One day when I was at Leona's, I told her how much trouble I was having learning how to do this, and she said, "Oh, it's easy!" She proceeded to put a small Chinese bowl on her head and race around the room with it. "See, it's easy."

I went home furious, but determined to do it. The very next time I tried, I got it. I have no idea why, or what I did that made the difference.

After Leona and I reviewed the footage of the Tunisian dances, she decided that she could put together a dance using the material I had accumulated on my trip, so I went over to work with her on the choreography.

Going to Leona's was like entering a time warp: I'd go over to work on something—making a costume part, for example—and pretty soon, it was two or three in the morning. Choreographing the Tunisian dance was no exception.

First, Leona asked me to demonstrate each movement; she carefully made a drawing of it and labeled it with a name we gave it. She sketched, erased and sketched again until she was satisfied, so this took quite a bit of time. When she was done, we had a list of all the moves that we could use in the choreography.

Then we started working on the choreography itself. Leona divided up a piece of paper into squares and sketched each move of the dance in a square—a choreographic storyboard. There was a lot more erasing and re-sketching.

At one point, we ran into a problem and didn't know how to resolve it. Leona started talking about anything and everything—except the choreography. By this time it was already late, and I was getting antsy since I had to work the next day. But after talking like this for a while, she came up with a solution. I realized that by talking about other subjects, she was letting her subconscious work on the problem—she

called it "putting it on the back burner." Much later, I learned how to use this technique myself, and it amazes me how well it works.

While we dancers were learning the Tunisian movements and choreography, we also had to make some of the costume parts. While in Tunisia, I bought enough *melias* (*melia*: a length of fabric draped, pinned and tied on the body) and the pins (*khlal*) that hold it on for the number. We could make the headscarves and belts, but the jewelry was a problem. The hair ornaments and jewelry that hangs from the *khlal* were chains of large flattened links that were quite distinctive, and the dancers wore heavy silver anklets (*khulkhal*).

Karin Machleder and I figured that we could make the chains out of washers, which we cut open and linked together, two by two. They looked quite good from a distance, but we later discovered that when we performed they often fell apart. It seemed that at least one had to be reassembled after each performance. On a later trip to Tunisia, I was able to get the real thing and save us a lot of headaches.

The *khulkhal* were another challenge. We decided to use aluminum tubing, but didn't know how we could bend it into circles without ruining it. Karin did a lot of looking around and found a plumber who had a pipe bender, a special tool to do this, and talked the plumber into bending enough tubing for all the dancers in the number.

When it came time to perform the number, several Tunisians I had met at the UCLA International Student Center came to see it. They were very impressed except for one movement, which they said was too slow. I realized that they were right and that we could do that step double time to the music—and that's the way we did it from then on.

The number was popular, and we danced it in many AMAN concerts. After doing it for years, I finally had a chance to watch it in performance, and it was a thrill to see how it looked in its entirety from the audience under the lights.



Ephemera—and other items retrieved from Pearl's Ladarke Basket

June 14, 1974

Dear Tony & AMAN,

Greetings from Yugoslavia! We arrived safely in Dubrovnik after a long charter flight. A nine hour delay in Bangkor, Maine is hardly a folklorist's dream. We played hop skoče to while away the time, but the hours seemed to drag. One girl was reduced to tears by the delay but we said, "Don't kraj, Didaka."

Some friends met us in Dubrovnik and asked how we felt. "A little ranče," we replied, "but generally fajn, fajn poteže." We sure could use a glasa rujno vino.

The next morning we (Rada Bi and Polupa Lonce) decided to rent a Swedish car and drive up the coast. The first day was delightful... tulipanis in bloom everywhere. We ran into a few friends from vojovale (which is not far from the San Gabriel Vale)—you know them, too—Sheila Brul, Debbie Naluknuti and Lester Goro.

We stopped for drinks. Lester ordered tea, Sheila and Debbie had coffee, but Rada and I didn't know what to order, so Sheila suggested we traj nine naj. We all got our checks except Lester. So there we were wasting a precious hour waiting. Finally the waitress came and Lester exploded with glee and cried out, "Ah moj tiček."

We went on to a museum to look at some costumes. There were some Japanese tourists there who introduced themselves to us—"Ja dok san," said the first. "Vazda san,"

said the second. When we heard them say "Koga toga" while looking at a chemise from Bosnia, we felt it was time to move on.

It was my turn to drive. We headed down the strica when horros, the vol-vol-volove which gets twenty miles to the gal-gal-gati, started to act crazy. Oj vej ljudi—the gir-gir gime trouble and it was almost time for din din din.

We were so tired and dojdi and Rada wanted to vašem her face and I wanted to dumaj zlato but I had to ternina the car off the road. We got out to stretch and saw a woman walking her dog. "Dalmatinci?" we inquired. "No," she replied huffily, "this is my pet vaganov."

The skajaj was getting dark so we headed back to our hotel. We rushed up to our room and when we spajdasicam we decided to call it a day because pritisnula our second adventurous day would begin.

Love to everyone,

Rada & Polupa

* * *

The first person to correctly identify **Rada** and **Polupa** will receive an authentic replica of Rada's Thracian Hankie (gently used) and Polupa's actual left Šop Opanki (the right was used to prop open the bus window somewhere outside of Bullhead City and was never seen again.)



AMAN SPAWN—*When Artists Breed: The first in a series of interviews with children of AMAN Artists*

by intrepid reporter
Susie North

Shira O'Keefe

Accomplished musical theatre gypsy singer/dancer, Shira O'Keefe remembers tamburica rehearsals with her mom and maintains lifelong multi-generational friendships and collaborations with musicians and dancers from AMAN.



Susie: So Shira, you may be the person with the most relatives in AMAN—your mom (Barbara Weismann), your dad (Reuben Weismann), your aunt (Stephanie Moss), your cousin's dad (Ken Moss) and your stepfather (Don Green)!

Shira: And all my unofficial aunts and uncles...

Susie: Of course! What are your memories?

Shira: I remember staying up late to listen to AMAN because the music was so magical to me. When the tamburica orchestra rehearsed at my house, I would sneak closer and closer to where they were. I didn't want to be seen, because part of the fun was hearing Ricky (Schneider) cuss, and if any of the other musicians saw me they would gesture wildly and he would clean it up. In high school I became more self-conscious about liking this type of music. There was only one friend I trusted to listen to Balkan songs with me...because she liked the "yummy notes" too. I always liked the the dissonances and the rhythms. In college I majored in dance and I was the only one in my class who could "hold" the eights and the fives!

Susie: Anyone special you remember?

Shira: Oh yes—Nena (Šokčić)! Nena was very close with my family. My parents had honeymooned in Croatia, staying with Nena and Misha, and Abba (my dad) was instrumental in getting them into the U.S. Once in college I was doing a paper entitled "From Village to Stage." My focus was Lindjo—how the dance made it from its origins to the concert stage. My parents had always talked about Lindjo—how

challenging it was, the necessity of being absolutely in sync with your partner—and I'd come to think of it as a Fabled Number to Conquer. I consulted with Tony Shay and used a video of it from the 25th Anniversary show. One afternoon I asked Abba to teach it to me. It was hard because of our heights and the usual father-daughter drama. Seeing that this wasn't working, my dad got on the phone, had a quick chat in Croatian, and bundled me into the car. Next thing I knew we were in Nena and Misha's living room. She had cleared away the carpet and furniture. Then and there, she and my dad taught me Lindjo. Abba's philosophy was "If we can't do this right we won't do it at all!"

Susie: And what about Reuben's big surprise?

Shira: (laughing) Oh, it was the 25th Anniversary Show at Royce Hall. Abba had told my mom and me that he was practicing for a special tennis tournament. The practices were on Thursdays and Sundays (hmm...) but we couldn't watch him play because he "wasn't ready yet!" We had three tickets to the show and he told us he had an appointment beforehand, so he'd meet us there. Minutes before >>>

>>> **Shira O'Keefe***(continued)*

the curtain, Carol Schneider, who was in on it, handed me a note. It was from Abba. He said that although I had seen pictures of him dancing on the stage and watched him dance at parties, he wanted to perform for me before he was too old. The lights went down, the curtain went up—and there he was in Ladarke.

Susie: *What about Owen (Shira's son)?*

Shira: Well, I got to listen to Balkan music as I was falling asleep, and now he comes to Nevenka rehearsal and does the same. If I'm practicing words in the car, he tells me which songs he especially likes. So much nostalgia...

Susie: *Anything else?*

Shira: Well, I never thought it was odd to have people my parents' age as my friends. Everyone in this world is so young-at-heart and fun!

*Postcards from the Diaspora—The Latest from **AMAN** Alumni*

Klezmerlicious

After stumbling upon a Yiddish Dance workshop in Berkeley almost seven years ago, AMAN Alum **Bruce Bierman** was amazed he had never seen this exuberant expressive folk dance from the Ashkenazi Jews of Eastern Europe before. He has since traveled to New York, Poland and Israel to learn with several Yiddish Dance masters and now teaches and leads Klezmer dance throughout



California and beyond. Bruce has led Yiddish dance with some of the greatest Klezmer bands in the business including: Veretzki Pass (with AMAN alum Stu Brotman) and The Klezmatics (with AMAN alum Lorin Sklamberg). Don't miss him at the **Klezmer J.A.M. Session** with the **L.A. Jewish Symphony** Monday July 29th 7:00pm at the Jon Anson Ford Theatre in Los Angeles.

—Free Song Downloads from the AMAN Archives—

“Tilinka” and “Bou Salem Ensemble”

Inspired by our Tall Tales? Shake a leg to our own AMAN Romanian **Tilinka Horo** featuring Stuart Brotman, Jim Knight, Larry Saunders, Vic Koler and John Zeretzke, and shake it but don't break it to one of Mardi's amazing Tunisian field recordings of **Bou Salem Ensemble**.

Click to
download
[**Tilinka**](#)

Click to
download
[**Bou Salem Ensemble**](#)

from Mardi's Tunisia and
Shikhat field recordings



SHAMELESS SELF PROMOTER OR JUST EXCITED ABOUT THE REUNION?

Show how much you care. Buy an Ad for the Amazing AMAN 50th Reunion Souvenir Book!

You will want to be a part of this. **The Reunion Souvenir Book** is going to be chock full of memories, photos, trivia and tributes. Shout out to family and friends, or that one dance partner who wouldn't let go of your hand when you were barefoot and running across the minor league hockey ice like silly monkeys climbing up the back of the scaffolding and scrambling onto the stage in some wintery Michigan backwater stadium.

Buy an Inside/Outside Cover for: \$300

Buy a full COLOR page for: \$200

Buy a full page (B/W) for: \$150

Buy a half page for: \$100

Buy a quarter page for: \$60

Buy an eighth page (business card) for: \$40

PLUS—

Gold Council page (\$50 per name)

Gold Well-Wisher page (\$10 per name)

Send your ad requests to **Ronda Berkeley:**
editor@AMAN50.com

Sign up for the **KAFANA!**

Our reunion **Kafana** space will be intimate, club-like with fun lighting and memorabilia adorning the walls, have a sound system and dedicated stage area available for performers, a small dance floor for kicking up our heels should the spirit move us, and most importantly a **FULL BAR** (no-host) replete with those infamous "Abba Zabba" candy bars. All in all, a space just right for our alumni, friends and family to make a little magic happen—AMAN style!

Calling all SKITS—we wholeheartedly encourage those of you with wild and crazy ideas for skits to gather your co-hearts, your partners in crime and SIGN UP for a Kafana time-slot to perform them!!

Calling all Singers, Musicians, Storytellers, Dancers, Whatever (you know who you are!)—if you have a talent (solo or group) that you'd like to share with us at the reunion, then SIGN UP for a Kafana time-slot to perform them!!

NOW'S the time folks, sign ups are being accepted.

Contact **Trudy Israel** via email at:
kafana@aman50.com

Request for **SILENT AUCTION ITEMS** to Benefit Mendocino Folklore Camp's Youth Scholarships

We will be having a **Silent Auction** during our AMAN50 Reunion and we are relying on **YOU** to make it a success! We invite you to get inspired and think about what you might (literally!) bring to the table—fun or nostalgic AMAN memorabilia, fabulous art or folk related items, interesting goods and services (think gift baskets, certificates, donations of professional time/services, culinary delights), or whatever else you might dream up! All donations are tax deductible, and the auction proceeds will benefit Mendocino Folklore Camp's youth scholarship program. We are literally paying-it-forward to the next generation of folk dance and music enthusiasts.

Please label items with donor's name, a title or description, estimated value, and a suggested opening bid. We'd love to know in advance what item(s) you might bring.

Please contact **Patti Ledner and Bev Mann** via email at auctiondonations@aman50.com.
 Thank you for your creativity and generosity!