



Welcome to our March newsletter! In this addition read our interview with Friend of the Folklore Center, banjo master Tony Trischka. And we have a new video with our newest employee, Austin, playing our 2012 Rumley Strumberg Archtop guitar. Then store founder, Harry Tuft tells us about his instruments that got away, and this story is a doozy! We spotlight the legendary Mother Folkers and one of our favorite music teachers. Plus, learn how culture can boost the popularity of musical instruments. All this and more below.



Friend of the Denver Folklore Center: Tony Trischka

Banjo master and Friend of the DFC, Tony Trischka sat down with us to talk about his musical collaborations, his latest album and lots more.

Musical Collaborations

Having played with some amazing musicians over the years like (former student) Béla Fleck, Alison Krauss and Steve Martin to name a few, it's pretty clear Tony enjoys collaborating. "I've worked with the Violent Femmes over the years. I've done recordings with them and they've graciously been on my recordings. We've done live shows. They're great guys and [Gordon Gano](#) plays a little banjo.

How Things Have Changed

Tony has been around the music scene for quite some time and says things were a lot less complicated back then. "In certain ways it was easier back then. Like, you could book five nights at one place. From 1973 to 1975 I was in a group called Breakfast Special and we played Gerde's Folk City in the Village five nights in a row. It's not like that now - you do one at a time these days. In terms of bluegrass festivals, in 1973 we made two phone calls and booked the entire summer. In those days there weren't that many festivals, so one festival would hire you for three days. Now you're there for a day, maybe two. And then there

“Working with Steve Martin has been amazing. He’s a great guy, hugely generous. I first met him in 1974 when we shared billing at a club in New York City. He was an up-and-coming comedian and playing some banjo, so we talked about that. There was a four-night stand – two nights with him and then the Buckingham Nicks (Lindsey Buckingham and Stevie Nicks), this up-and-coming group. Whatever happened to them?

were only two festival promoters – Jim Clark and Carlton Haney. We called both of them and they each gave us five weekends. In that sense it was a lot easier back then.”

Read our entire interview with Tony Trischka [HERE](#).



Rumley Western 'Strumberg' Archtop (2012)

Staff Picks: 2012 Rumley Strumberg Archtop

This giant jazz guitar was built by esteemed Denver luthier John Rumley back in 2012, and was modeled after the Strumberg Master 400 archtop - hence the 19-inch lower bout. Watch and listen as our newest employee, Austin, shows why we love this guitar. Learn more about this beautiful instrument (including price and more photos) [HERE](#).



Harry Tuft and The One(s) that Got Away

Denver Folklore Center founder, Harry Tuft, had so many instruments that got away, we had to give him his own page! Here's the story told by Harry himself:

I was about to go on a trip for a couple of weeks and thought some of my guitars would be more secure in a storage locker than at my condo, which turned out to be an incorrect idea.

I had the instruments in hard-shell cases and took them to my storage unit. Unbeknownst to me, the woman in a white Mercedes was behind me was a thief and also had a storage unit there. She followed me and saw the instruments in hard-shell cases. What that generally means is that they are of considerable value. While I was away, she and her boyfriend cut the lock off, stole the instruments and put another lock on so it wouldn't be noticed by the storage unit manager.

When I came back, I saw that it wasn't my lock. The manager cut the lock and realized they were gone. Luckily, there were cameras by the elevator and we were able to reconstruct what had happened. Later we found out she, her daughter and boyfriend had records. She ended up getting caught and sent to prison. There was some \$12,000 worth of instruments that were stolen. There was one electric guitar, two acoustic and one classical acoustic.

Here are the instruments that got away from Harry (clockwise in the above photos): Gibson ES-225TD (electric), Santa Cruz Guitar, OM Grand, Juan Pimentel Flamenco Guitar (1957), Custom "J-200 Style" Jumbo Flat Top Guitar (no photo). (photos sources available in blog post - link below)

Read the story of each guitar [HERE](#).



Colorado Music Hall of Fame Induction Video from 2019

Musician Spotlight: The Mother Folkers

The Mother Folkers ("MoFos") began in 1973, when several women musicians realized they all had followings, and that by combining to perform a show, they might be able to have fun playing music to larger audiences. The Mother Folkers' ("the most carefully pronounced group in show business") first performance was at the Denver Folklore Center Concert Hall. After 25 years of presenting unique concerts each spring, the "Fos" voted for a two-year sabbatical. It turned into seven years, while families were raised, bills were paid, and other music made.

The MoFos reunited in 2010, 2012 and 2014 to help two of their own with benefit concerts, and in 2019 when they were inducted into the Colorado Music Hall of Fame.



What People Are Saying About Us

Just a note to say that the OME Celtic Star banjo I purchased from your shop arrived in great shape. It is a vastly better instrument than I am player and I hope I can grow into it at least a little. Many thanks to Ian and the others for their help. I am looking forward to stopping by in person next time I am in Denver. Thanks again. – L.M.



Music Teacher Spotlight: John Kramer

Multi-instrumentalist, John Kramer teaches classical guitar. He has over fifteen years of experience teaching and performing classical guitar and has a Master of Music degree from the University of Texas at Austin, where he studied with world-renowned teacher and performer, Professor Adam Holzman.

Before college, John took a lot of music lessons. "I took piano lessons in elementary school, then guitar lessons in middle and high school and kept going up, then I went to college and grad school for music." In addition to classical guitar, John also plays piano, electric bass, keyboards, baglamazaki and charango, but that's not all. "A master's degree in music education basically means you have to learn to play every instrument, plus conducting. It prepared me for a classroom setting in all levels of school."

John first got into teaching music when his guitar instructor from college asked him if he wanted a job (at a private music academy). "Prior to that I was performing at any type of gig people would hire me to do."

John enjoys both teaching and performing. Teaching, because it's more of a stable gig. "I had gigs where I'd perform a few times a week then teach during the day to support myself. Teaching was somewhat competitive, I felt like there was a steep learning curve so I had to learn super-fast and get better at teaching. So, I took a lot of teaching method classes."

Learn more about John [HERE](#) and if you are interested in scheduling a lesson, go to his [website](#) or [email](#) John.



**KAMAKA HP-1
PINEAPPLE SOPRANO**



**KAMAKA HF-2
CONCERT**



**KANILE'A K-1S
SOPRANO**



**KANILE'A OHA
TENOR PREMIUM**

KAMAKA AND KANILE'A UKULELES

With a legendary history, great sound and musical versatility, the ukulele brings joy to people around the world. We love it too!

Two of our favorite brands are Kamaka and Kanile'a. The Kamaka family has been hand crafting some of the finest ukuleles available for over 100 years! And for the uke enthusiast interested in a Hawaiian-made ukulele, few names carry more weight than Kanile'a.

Visit our website [HERE](#) or come by the store and see our selection of ukes today!



THE BOOST OF POPULAR CULTURE

Israel Kamakawiwo'ole also known as Bruddah or just simply IZ, was a Hawaiian musician, singer, songwriter whose 1993 version of "Somewhere Over the Rainbow"/"What a Wonderful World" may have been the catalyst for a dramatic increase in ukulele sales over the next few years. And in 2004 ukulele master Jake Shimabukuro catapulted instrument sales to new heights with his version of "While My Guitar Gently Weeps".

So does popular culture regularly drive instrument sales? My colleagues at the Denver Folklore Center shared with me several other scenarios that may fit that pattern. The year was 1972, the movie was *Deliverance*, and the song was "Dueling Banjos". In the weeks and months following the release of the film sales of banjos at the store increased significantly. The same may have been the case in 2000 when *Oh, Brother, Where Art Thou?* featured the acoustic guitar in some exciting, driving songs. Sales of guitars jumped soon after the movie came out.

According to harmonica historian Kim Fields, “the golden age of the mouth organ” came between the world wars, when vaudevillians toured with mouth harps and Hollywood westerns put them between the lips of glamorous cowboys. In 1944, a former Marine from Chicago, Jerry Murad, formed a trio of harmonizing harmonica players in dinner jackets and ties called the Harmonicats. Not long after, Sonny Boy Williamson II and Little Walter were pioneering the Chicago blues harmonica sound. Each of these trends influenced folk, rock and soul players, from Bob Dylan to Stevie Wonder to John Popper of Blues Traveler.

So which folk instrument might soon get a boost from popular culture? - Saul Rosenthal, Co-Owner, Denver Folklore Center

Contact Us

Denver Folklore Center
1893 S Pearl Street
Denver, CO 80210

Phone: 303-777-4786
Email: info@denverfolklore.com
Website: denverfolklore.com

Want to change how you receive these emails?
You can update your preferences or unsubscribe from this list.

