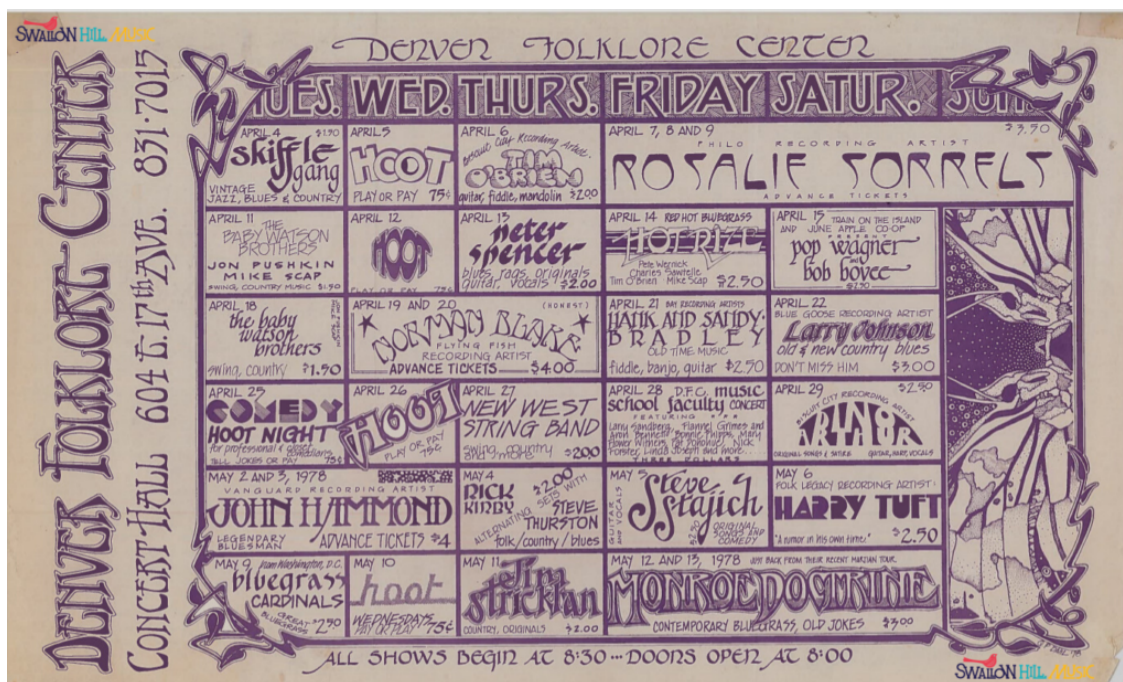




The dust has settled on 2020 and we're headed full-steam into February 2021! There's a lot going on at the Denver Folklore Center so let's dive in. First, Swallow Hill gives us a blast from the past with a look at a DFC concert calendar from 1978. Then meet store co-owner Saul Rosenthal and learn about his musical influences and how he came to buy the Folklore Center. We Recommend Mermaid Avenue Vol 1 by Billy Bragg & Wilco - read all about it. And do you know about Blueridge Guitars? These historic reproductions are something to see and hear. Then we were lucky enough to have Friends of the Folklore Center Meadow Mountain stop by and play us a tune. All this and more. Let's get started!



Musician Tim O'Brien Shares DFC Memories

When [Swallow Hill Music](#) recently shared this April 1978 Denver Folklore Center concert calendar with Grammy winning singer-songwriter and multi-instrumentalist [Tim O'Brien](#), a calendar that includes what some believe may be Tim's first solo concert, his response was "Those were some heady days, a lot of things forming."

While Tim didn't recall much about his show, he had plenty to say about many of the other artists on that calendar, including the Baby Watson Brothers, the Bluegrass Cardinals, Norman Blake, Harry Tuft and, not surprisingly, Hot Rize. "...a scene I was a small part of was bubbling and cooking."

Tim shared so many recollections from that time the folks at Swallow Hill had to blog about it. You can read more, and get a closer look at the calendar, which was designed by Bev Schware, [here](#).

Were you at any of the April 1978 Denver Folklore Center concerts? Let us know about your experience.



Staff Focus - Saul Rosenthal

“Music was imprinted in my DNA” is how Denver Folklore Center Co-Owner Saul Rosenthal describes his connection with music. Saul was born in Philadelphia, which happens to be where store founder Harry Tuft and current co-owner Claude Brachfeld were also born – they joke that to own the DFC you have to be from Philly. His introduction to music came from his mother who was a very good pianist with a wonderful singing voice. Saul began singing and playing piano (a 1934 Steinway parlor grand) at six years old, and then took classical training for 10 years. He still has the Steinway - “it’s in perfect condition and my wife is now taking lessons on it.”

Classical music has always been a critical part of Saul’s life, especially chamber music. In 6th grade he studied Dvorak’s [New World Symphony](#), which led him to attend classical concerts. He and a friend would take the subway to the H&H

Some of the careers Saul’s had over the years are: Associate Professor of Sociology at Creighton University, Regional Director at the Anti-Defamation League and President of SFR Public Relations.

Today Saul also plays the keyboard, ukulele, mandolin (“enough to demonstrate to customers”) and harmonica (he studied with harmonica legend Clay Kirkland at [Swallow Hill](#)). His early musician influences included the Kingston Trio, John Denver (when he was in the Chad Mitchell Trio), New Christy Minstrels, Beach Boys and the Righteous Brothers. More recently he’s become a huge fan of John Gorka, the Hillbenders, Great Big Sea and local musicians Dakota Blonde, Rich Moore and Mollie O’Brien.

Saul first visited the DFC in 1993 and became an “FOH” (friend of Harry Tuft) around 2000. Later, when

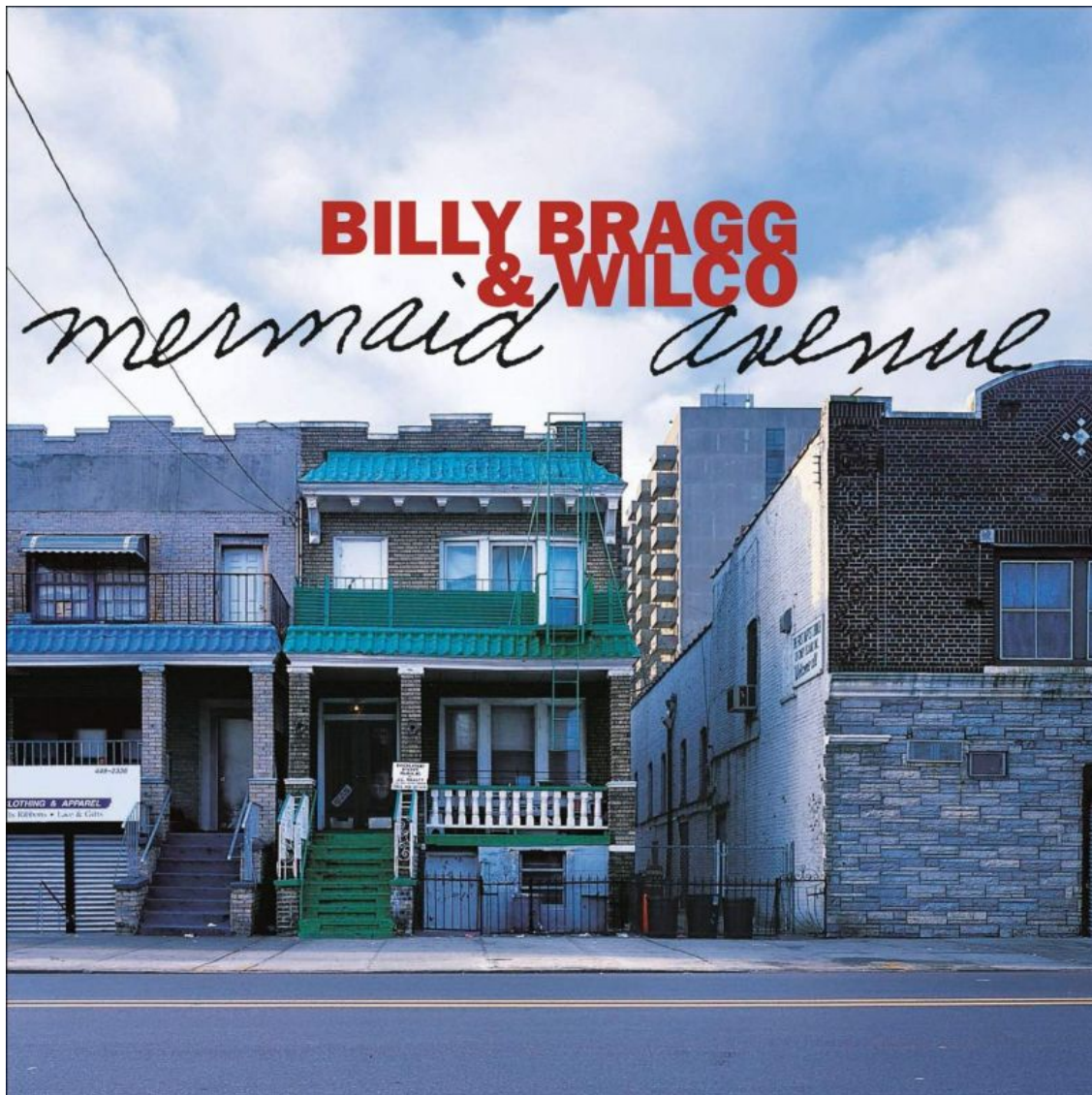
Automat and put nickels into slots to get their lunch before attending the junior symphony, conducted by a young Leonard Bernstein. “My introduction to orchestra music was at the hands of one of the greatest conductors of all times.”

At 16 he began playing guitar – his first was a Gibson Folk Jumbo. “It was way too big for me, but it was a cool guitar.”

After moving to Chicago, Saul frequented folk music clubs and listened to Steve Goodman, Josh White, Peter Paul and Mary, Judy Collins, Joan Baez, Bob Dylan and others. “But like other musicians I had to get a day job to pay the bills and support my guitar addiction.”

Harry decided to sell the store, he spoke to Saul. Harry “didn’t want to turn it over to a corporate entity that didn’t have at its core a respect for and a desire to continue to support the acoustic and roots community.” Instead, on August 16, 2016 he sold the store to Saul (and Claude).

Harry still frequents the store and says he “couldn’t be happier.” Saul feels the same way. “Seeing a customer get the instrument they want and walk out with a giant smile on their face” is one of his favorite things about working at the store. That and the DFC crew. “They are all wonderful people with great expertise.” As Saul says, “It’s all about the people.”



We Recommend...

***Mermaid Avenue Volume I* - by Billy Bragg & Wilco**

In 1992, Nora Guthrie and the Woody Guthrie Foundation commissioned British folk singer Billy Bragg to bring new life to Woody Guthrie's legacy of songs that had previously gone unrecorded and unheard for years. With over 1,000 songs and lyrics in the archives, Billy Bragg set out to create a collection that illustrated Guthrie's artful lyricism and masterful songwriting.

What initially started as a single live performance tribute concert in New York's Central Park eventually became a multi-year recording project with the help of Jeff Tweedy and his band [Wilco](#) as well as other notable collaborators [Natalie Merchant](#) and Corey Harris and Jay Bennett. *Mermaid Avenue Volume I* (and eventually *Volumes II and III*) helped expose new generations of people to Woodie Guthrie's work by presenting it in a contemporary folk context and is worth a listen indeed! Give it a listen [here](#).



What People Are Saying About Us

"Thank you for the fast shipping! I am very pleased with the Pono. Brick and mortar music stores are very important to me and I will always shop at an actual place of business. The phone call was a personal touch that reinforced this. Stay safe...we'll all be jammin' with our friends again soon." - J.B.



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Blueridge Guitars

Blueridge Guitars have been around for more than 30 years and are designed and built by the Saga Music Company (which also manufactures [Kentucky Mandolins](#) and Regal Resophonic instruments). Blueridge is best known for building historic and pre-war reproductions of classic American guitars. Their level of quality and affordability is unmatched, so it's no wonder they are firmly established as one of the top guitar brands. Take one for a test drive and see why musicians of all skill levels rave about these instruments. See our huge selection [here](#).



How the Cancellation of NAMM's 2021 Live Event Affects Members of the Music Industry

The National Association of Music Merchants' (NAMM) 2021 in-person show was canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic and instead took place online. This was a huge disappointment for those in the music industry, as this event is considered their largest and most important annual gathering. Not only does the show allow members of the industry the opportunity to create valuable relationships, they are also introduced to the latest products from top manufacturers. While the online event "Believe in Music" took place January 18-22, the experience was simply not the same for attendees.

Learn more about the NAMM Show and how it affects the folks in the music industry, including reps from Taylor and Eastman Guitars and Denver Folklore Center Co-owner, Saul Rosenthal [here](#).



Friends of the Folklore Center: Meadow Mountain

Summers Baker and Jack Dunlevie from the group [Meadow Mountain](#) stopped by the shop and were gracious enough to play us a tune. Jack is playing our [Pava Player Oval Hole mandolin](#) (made by Pava Mandolins based out of Austin Texas) and Summers is playing a 2006 Bourgeois Slope D Adirondack Top Dreadnought.

Watch the demo [here](#). And keep an ear out for their new album - coming soon!



Melodicas

The melodica (which is also called a melodion and pianica, depending on the brand) is a free-reed instrument similar to the harmonica and pump organ. It has a keyboard on top and is played by blowing air through a mouthpiece - there's the standard mouthpiece that fits into a hole in the side of the instrument, as well as a longer flexible hose mouthpiece. Pressing a key opens a hole, allowing air to flow through a reed. The keyboard usually covers two or three octaves, allowing for many musical styles and applications. These small instruments are lightweight, portable, very playable and have a loud, clear sound. The melodica is a whole lot of instrument at a very affordable price.

Enjoy [this performance](#) of *The Nutcracker* by the group Melodica Men and see our selection of melodicas on our website [here](#).

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