

CENTRAL COUNTY

CONTRA COSTA TIMES San Jose Mercury News

Accordion, ukulele and klezmer music gathering a Bay Area following

By Laura Casey
Oakland Tribune | San Jose Mercury News |
Contra Costa Times
November 19, 2009

THEY ALL have histories spanning centuries. But the accordion, ukulele and klezmer music are experiencing a rebirth. Those Old World, old-timey sounds that used to be more hip to your grandparents are making a comeback.

Mainstream bands such as Arcade Fire and The Decemberists are bringing the squeezebox to recording sessions while Michael DaSilva of Berkeley's DaSilva Ukulele Co. says he's seeing a younger set of people interested in picking up the instrument.

"There's so much new, independent music being produced on it," he says. "People under 30 are becoming attracted to it."

Here are some musicians in the Bay Area that are producing these eclectic sounds and some places where you can experience the revival.

The Accordion

Tara Linda is a former punk rock drummer who gave up the sticks, at least for now, for the accordion. When Linda, a Hohner-endorsed button accordion player, starts playing the instrument, she emanates a calm, serene vibe. She squeezes out mesmerizing desert cabaret and mostly upbeat Tex-Mex on her accordions and sings to the rhythms she creates.

"You can just feel how emotive it is," Linda



Talent's Beamen rebounds

LARRY BEAMEN'S BEAMEN will admit it. He was pretty... (text continues)



Larry Beamen performs... (text continues)



Oakland based accordion player Tara Linda, a former punk rock drummer, plays Tex-Mex, desert cabaret, and is working on a "tortilla western"-style album

Now Junior's got a squeezebox

By Laura Casey
TARA LINDA has history spanning centuries. But the accordion, ukulele and klezmer music are experiencing a rebirth... (text continues)

Shocking carnage in new 'Duty'

MORNING WARFARE... (text continues)



After playing through the... (text continues)

VIDEO GAME REVIEWS

- WHALE: Call of Duty Modern Warfare 2
- PLATFORM: Xbox 360 PlayStation 3
- GRADE: A
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says as she gently taps out a waltz she penned in her Oakland home. "An accordion really tugs at the heartstrings."

Although she easily fell in love with the accordion, her affinity for the much-maligned instrument was a tough sell to her old punk-rock buddies. She lost friends, she jokes, when she started on the squeezebox about eight years ago. But what she gained is something much deeper —

a connection to an instrument that has its own heritage and legacy.

"It's like a trip around the world," she says. "The accordion connects you to music from all over the globe."

And with bands such as award-winning Canadian indie rock group Arcade Fire incorporating the accordion into their musical repertoire, the instrument is distancing itself from the days when the accordion was just something your uncle from the homeland would play at family events.

Linda is Miss November in the 2010 West Coast Accordion Babes calendar. The calendar, which sold out in three weeks last year, includes a CD of the pin-ups' work along with sultry images of some of the state's best female accordion musicians. She is also currently recording a "tortilla western" album, one that blends spaghetti western, indie and Tex-Mex styles.

Learn more about Tara Linda at www.TaraLinda.com

Linda's favorite accordion musicians: Flaco Jimenez, KV Express and Mark Growden

Learn more: See Linda at the Accordion Babes Revue, 8 p.m. Nov. 21, The Accordion Apocalypse Repair Shop, 2626 Jennings St., San Francisco. \$10. 415-596-5952.

The Ukulele

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Oakland based accordion player Tara Linda, a former punk rock drummer, plays Tex-Mex, desert cabaret, and is working on a "tortilla western"-style album

Now Junior's Got a Squeezebox

photos/D. Ross Cameron.



San Antonio Express-News

Thursday, November 19, 2009 | mySA.com

The voice of South Texas since 1865

Linda redefining accordion's image

By Hector Saldaña - Express-News
December 18, 2009

Life is a cabaret, old chum. For West Coast accordion chanteuse Tara Linda, it's a desert cabaret. That's what she calls her "Tortilla Western" act, a hybrid of rock, blues, jazz and Tex-Mex.

"It's a celebration of the land, basically the Southwest from Texas to Arizona," she said. "There are elements of conjunto in it, there's Native Indian (music) from the deserts of Arizona. I grew up in both places. It's the music that I absorbed along the way."

She makes her first appearance at Casbeers at the Church Friday night, opening for Los TexManiacs. Linda plays the downstairs stage from 6:30 to 8:30; Los TexManiacs hit the upstairs stage around 9.

"She's got real cool stuff," said Max Baca of Los TexManiacs, who are on fire with a Grammy nod for the Smithsonian Folkways album "Borders y Bailes." The bajo sexto star will sit in near the end of Linda's solo set.

Linda has been in Austin this week recording more tracks for her upcoming album, "Tortilla Western." Baca and the legendary Flaco Jimenez appear on her new record.

The Dallas native came of age in Austin, she says. Not as an accordionist, but as a punk rock and power pop drummer in obscure bands including the Role Models. Later, she moved to Sacramento and joined a punk band, the Succulents. After injuring her shoulder, Linda moved to button accordion and began emulating singer Lydia Mendoza and immersing herself in

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 18, 2009 • SAN ANTONIO EXPRESS-NEWS

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BY HECTOR SALDAÑA
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LATIN NOTES

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See LATIN/13WK

LATIN

CONTINUED FROM 11WK

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She's self-taught, but mastered the instrument well enough to get an endorse-



ment deal from Hohner. She plays a blue Hohner Corona II. She also plays bass.

As a solo artist, Linda goes into "Latin torch" mode, channeling Mendoza for the last part of her show. That's when Baca will step in.

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cord because she "wanted the heart of the conjunto sound." Her new songs include "Padre Kino's Ghost," "Donde Estaba," "Dream Out Loud," "La Monarca" and "Homecoming," a bolero written for the troops.

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music | 11WK

Babes Pinups Calendar." They go for \$20 and include a companion CD.

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