

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



Now Junior's got a squeezebox
Accordion, ukulele, klezmer music make a comeback

By Laura Casey
TARA LINDA has taken a quantum leap. For the energetic, soulful and bluesy Tex-Mex singer-songwriter, she used to play punk rock with her former band, the Red Hot Chili Peppers. But now she's playing the accordion, ukulele and klezmer music. Linda, 34, 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.

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.

