



tradizioni

NEWSLETTER OF THE ITALIAN FOLK ART FEDERATION OF AMERICA

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FROM THE PRESIDENT

Now that all the glitter and little pieces of paper are swept from my floors, my dishes put back into the right cupboards and the fridge cleaned out of leftovers, I can finally sit down to write you. I want to wish all our members a Happy and Healthy start to a new millennium.

First let me tell you about the wonderful conference held in Milwaukee last October. The Italian Dance Group of Milwaukee did a fantastic job of putting together the conference. Many informative workshops in dance, song, and Italian customs gave the attendees a great deal of information to take home to their groups. For IFAFA members connected to the internet, one of our members in California, Meri DeLorenzo Howard, has quite a complete description of the conference on her website including many pictures. Join Meri at <http://pages.hotbot.com/arts/italfolk/home.html>.

This year's conference will be hosted by *I Campagnoli* in Pittsburgh, PA. Blaise Panizzi has already reserved Pittsburgh's Radisson Hotel for October 20, 21, & 22, 2000, so block off these dates on your calendars now and plan to attend. This one should be a blockbuster with a lot of new workshops scheduled. More information will be coming with a registration form in the next *Tradizioni*.

At our general membership meeting during the Milwaukee conference, we discussed methods of defraying rising expenditures caused by mailings and the production of *Tradizioni*. Dues increases were discussed. It was decided that membership dues would remain the same, with the following exception. Each Performing Group, in addition to the \$25.00 group fee, will now submit \$5.00 for each individual who belongs to the group. Spouses and children at the same address count as one. Each Performing Group may decide if the additional expense will be charged to the group's funds or to the individual members. Let this also serve as a reminder that dues are payable at the beginning of each calendar year.

Yours in Italian folklore,

Anna Marie Fiori

LA GIOSTRA DEL SARACINO, AREZZO THE JOUST OF THE SARACENS, AREZZO

La Giostra del Saracino è un antico gioco cavalleresco che affonda le sue origini nel Medio Evo. Ripristinato in rievocazione storica nel 1931, la Giostra del Saracino si corre ad Arezzo nella splendida Piazza Grande la terza domenica di giugno e la prima domenica di settembre. È una sfida contro il Buratto, un simulacro che rappresenta il Re dei Saracini, tra i quattro quartieri in cui è divisa la città: Porta Crucifera, Porta del Foro, Porta S. Andrea e Porta S. Spirito.

Preceduta dall'esibizione degli Sbandieratori della Giostra, e accompagnata dal rullo dei tamburi e dal suono chiaro dei musicisti, c'è l'entrata in piazza di tutto il corteo storico della Giostra. Oltre trecento figuranti negli splendidi costumi d'epoca fanno il loro ingresso in Piazza Grande, accompagnati dal calore e dagli applausi dei quartieristi stipati nelle tribune e ai lati della piazza. Alla testa degli armati del quartiere entra il Maestro d'Arme e poi completa lo schieramento il Capitano del Quartiere con i Cavalieri di Casata.

Poi è la volta dei cavalieri (due per ogni quartiere) che vanno a misurarsi, lancia in resta, nella carriera contro il Buratto, Re dei Saracini. Vince la Giostra del Saracino il quartiere che realizza con i due giostatori il punteggio più alto, e al Rettore del quartiere vincitore viene consegnata la Lancia d'oro che poi viene portata in trionfo per le vie della città fino alla Sede del Quartiere.

The Joust of the Saracens is an ancient contest of chivalry which has its origins in the Middle Ages. Restored in an historical reenactment in 1931, the Joust of the Saracens takes place in Arezzo in the splendid Piazza Grande the third Sunday of June and the first Sunday of September. It is a challenge against the *Buratto*, the jousting dummy which represents the King of the Saracens, by the four *quartieri* (quarters) into which the city is divided: Porta Crucifera, Porta del Foro, Porta Sant'Andrea and Porta Santo Spirito.

Preceded by an exhibition by the *Sbandieratori* (flag-throwers) of the Joust, and accompanied by a drumroll and by the clear sounds of musicians, there is the entrance into the piazza of the entire historical retinue of the Joust. Over 300 participants in splendid period costumes make their entrance into the Piazza Grande, accompanied by the warmth and applause of the inhabitants of the *quartieri*, packed into the stands and along the sides of the piazza. At the head of each *quartiere's* troops enters the Master of Arms; next, completing the formation, is the Captain of the *Quartiere* with the Heraldic Knights.

Then it is the knights' turn (two for each *quartiere*) who compete, lance in place, at full speed against the *Buratto*, King of the Saracens. The winner of the Joust of the Saracens is the *quartiere* whose two jousts obtain the highest number of points, and the Chancellor of the winning *quartiere* is awarded the Golden Lance which is carried in triumph through the city streets to the Seat of the *Quartiere*. JSC

MEET OUR ITALIAN FOLK TROUPES

The Italian Dance Group of Milwaukee, Inc.



The Italian Dance Group of Milwaukee, Inc., has been in existence for some fifty-five years. We are not certain of the exact date of its origination, but we have confirmed a confident estimation from our elders. The dance group was formed so many years ago in order to pass time with those fellow *cugini* (cousins), *fratelli* (brothers), or *paesani* (fellow Italians) who lived in the neighborhood. This organization was established through one of the sole instigators, Lisa Di Polis, who has since passed away. Her efforts encouraged many others to join the club with the intention to spend a pleasurable time with those dear friends and family from the "old country." The original members of the group have since departed, only to leave behind a treasured gift, they probably never initially conceived of its longevity and existence.

To day, the dance group strives to keep alive the traditions that were passed on to us from our ancestors. We work hard to preserve Italian heritage the way we know best: through music, dance, and costume. It has been our honor to travel all over the United States performing for various events. Some of our performances include baptisms, weddings, anniversaries, church festivals, and other sorts of festivities near and far.

In Milwaukee, we are proud to be a part of local events such as *Boerner in Bloom Rose Festival* held at the Botanical Gardens in Whitnall Park, Hales Corners. Also, *The International Holiday Folk Fair* is an event where the group has danced for the past thirty-some years. *Festa Italiana* is perhaps the most renowned festival, where we have been pleased to perform since its commencement twenty-two years ago.

In our efforts to sustain the rich culture that intricately bonds us together, our group has evolved to become close family members. We come together weekly, leaving aside the complex lives we live in order to serve our need to practice and to enjoy ourselves. Reminiscing about the historical past enables us to recall the attributes that the generations before us had inscribed. We can passionately remember the struggles, hardships, successes and the blessings that some of the Italians encountered. It has been told that the means of dancing was quite a remarkable way in which to console one another in difficult times.

The dance group currently consists of twenty-five members, some of whom are dancers and a few of the remaining people who danced shortly after the group originated. The group's members range in age from fourteen to sixty-plus years old. The younger generation of members usually join after dancing in the Children's Italian Dance Group of Milwaukee for some years. Since our group consists of a children's group as well, we are able to further our pursuit of cultural preservation. This indeed is one of our goals, to inspire the younger generation of Italian-American children and youth to keep alive the traditions of our past. We know that the future belongs to the youth, therefore it is their task to continue our spirit.

Talia Nicolina Salamone,
President, Italian Dance Group of Milwaukee

ETHNOGRAPHIC MUSEUMS IN ITALY

In this issue, we continue with a listing of Italy's "ethnographic" museums which may contain folk materials for research purposes. Please feel free to send in any additions or corrections that you discover in your travels.

In **Lazio**, in addition to the well-known *Museo Nazionale di Arti e Tradizioni Popolari* in Rome (listed in the Vol. 18 #2 issue of *Tradizioni*), there are these other possibilities:

- EtnoMuseo - Monti Lepini, c/o Palazzo Baronale, piazza Risorgimento 4, 04010 ROCCAGORGA (Latina) 0773 - 958947
- Museo civico della civiltà contadina, c/o Edificio Comunale, 02010 MICIGLIANO (Rieti) 0746 - 56393
- Museo del Folklore, piazza Sant'Egidio, 00100 ROMA (Roma) 06 - 5813717
- Centro Provinciale di Documentazione sulle Tradizioni Popolari, Palazzo Camerale, 00051 ALLUMIERE (Roma) 06 - 4060791
- Museo della civiltà contadina dell'Alta Valle dell'Aniene, via Mazzini 1, 00027 ROVIANO (Roma) 0774 - 90143
- Museo delle arti e tradizioni popolari, c/o l'ex Convento dei Carmelitani, 01030 CANEPINA (Viterbo) 0761 - 750990
- Museo delle Tradizioni Popolari, 01030 CANEPINA (Viterbo)

The region of **Trentino-Alto Adige** offers these museums:

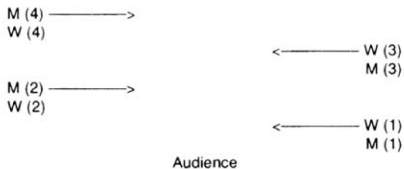
- Museo degli Usi e Costumi della Gente Trentina, via Mach 1, 38010 SAN MICHELE ALL'ADIGE (Trentino) 0461 - 650314/650556
- Istituto Culturale Ladino «Majon di Fashegn», via S. Giovanni, 38039 VIGO DI FASSA (Trentino) 0462 - 64267
- Museo Civico di Geologia ed Etnografia, piazza SS. Filippo e Giacomo, 38037 PREDAZZO (Trentino) 0462 - 502392
- Museo contadino di Foiana, 39011 FOIANA (Lana) (Bolzano) 0473 - 51750
- Museo provinciale di Castel Tirolo, 39019 TIROLO (Bolzano) 0473 - 220221
- Museo degli usi e costumi della Provincia di Bolzano, via Herzog Diet 24, 39031 TEODONE/ BRUNICO (Bolzano) 0474 - 552087
- Museo di Cultura Popolare, via Andreas Hofer 24, 39044 EGNA (Bolzano) 0471 - 812472
- Museo «La donna nel corso del tempo», via Portici 68, 39012 MERANO (Bolzano) 0473 - 31216
- Museo etnografico di San Martino in Passiria, 39010 SAN MARTINO IN PASSIRIA (Bolzano) 0473 - 641365

LO SCIOTIS DI LUCIGNANO

Lo Sciottis di Lucignano was taught at the 1999 IFAFA Conference in Milwaukee by Jackie Capurro and *Il Quartiere Italiano*, of the San Francisco Bay Area, California. *Lo Sciottis di Lucignano* is a courtly dance which *Il Quartiere Italiano* learned from *il Gruppo Folcloristico di Lucignano*, a folk troupe which has been researching and performing local folk dances and songs since 1937 in the medieval town of Lucignano, near Arezzo, in the region of Toscana. The music is available on the audiocassette which was produced for participants of the 1999 conference. For information about purchasing the audiocassette, and/or a videocassette of the conference, please contact Linda DeSanctis by email at «linda21768@aol.com».

This precision dance can effectively be done with as few as four couples, but looks even more impressive when performed with six or eight couples. *IQ!* usually performs it with four couples, and the instructions reflect this. If more couples are added, they would follow the other couples in their turn.

Beginning Formation: The dancers get into position and wait through the first set (the first 16 counts) of music. Couples in social dance position with joined hands [W's R, M's L] extended. Two lines, couples in each line facing the other line, staggered. Maintain stance while waiting to join in.



- A. **BASIC STEP SEQUENCE.** Couple (1) begins. Starting on M's L and W's R: step (ct 1), step-across in front (ct 2), three-step turn [CCW - 1/2 turn so that M and W exchange places] (ct 3-4), four sliding steps in LOD (ct 5-6-7-8), three-step turn [CW 1/2 turn so that M and W exchange places again] (ct 9-10), three-step turn [CW 1/4 turn more so that W now has her back to the line she just left] (ct 11-12), step-hop-step [W back/begin on R; M forward/begin on L] (ct 13-14), step-hop-step [W forward/begin on R; M back/begin on L] (ct 15-16). During the step-hop-step sequence, couples stay in social dance position, but with arms extended so that they are practically side by side, R hips touching. On the last step (ct 16), couple returns to social dance position, facing the opposite line, ready to begin the entire sequence again.

Couple (1) is now directly in front of, and in the same position as, couple (2). For the next set of music, couples (1) and (2) repeat the Basic Step Sequence, now moving to the opposite side of the stage. Couple (3) joins in the next set of music, and so on, until all couples are dancing. **THERE ARE NINE SETS OF THIS MUSIC.** All couples continue with this Basic Step through the ninth set. On the last four counts of the ninth set, during the final step-hop-step, every other couple takes extra long skips across the stage, making a 1/2-turn, to return to the double-lines position, but now facing partners:



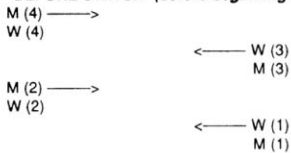
- B. All dancers face partners and move in the direction of the audience: step-together-step, and touch in front with curtsy (W) or bow (M), W hands holding skirt, M hands on hips. Repeat, moving away from audience.

Repeat the step-together-step toward audience, while making one full turn [dancers beginning on R foot turn CW; dancers beginning on L foot turn CCW]. Immediately rejoin social dance position, as in Beginning Formation.

- C. **All couples** complete one Basic Step Sequence, passing through opposite line during the slides.

All couples begin Basic Step Sequence again, but this time, as couples approach each other, W use the first three-step turn to exchange places, twirling CCW [W(1) with W(2), W(3) with W(4), etc.]. M must step around partner slightly so that he will be facing new partner. Now with new partners, continue Basic Step Sequence, W, in essence, returning to the positions they just left.

BEFORE SWITCH (before beginning Step C)



AFTER SWITCH (at end of Step C)



LO SCIOTIS DI LUCIGNANO (CONTINUED)

- D. Repeat Step B.
- E. **All couples** begin Basic Step Sequence again, but this time, during slides, couples form circle moving CCW, W with backs to center of circle. Finish that Basic Step Sequence and one more sequence (total of two) in circle, ending with W with backs to center of circle, facing partners (slightly to one side so that R shoulders are near).
- F. Elbow turns around circle (32 cts), W traveling CCW, M CW, with small walking steps:
R elbow turn with partner making a complete 360° turn with partner (6 cts per turn), then L elbow turn with next partner, then R, and L, making one complete circle with each new partner; **SHOULD TURN WITH FIVE PARTNERS TOTAL** [During sequence, W hold skirts with free hand; M free hand on hip]. Slight pause before Grand Right and Left.
- G. Grand Right and Left: Starting with R hands, weave R and L, W traveling CCW, M CW, continuing around the circle with 32 small walking steps. On steps 31 and 32, form couples (not necessarily original partners), W to M's R, holding hands loosely at shoulder height, in two lines, facing audience:

W M	W M
W M	W M
Audience	

- H. Bow (final three counts of music).

- WOMEN:**
- 1) hold skirt out on R side
 - 2) point forward with L foot
 - 3) bring L foot back, touching ball of foot to floor, bending forward at waist to bow
- MEN:**
- 1) stand in position, free hand on hip
 - 2) stand in position
 - 3) bring L foot back, touching ball of foot to floor, bending forward at waist to bow

Abbreviations:

M = man	L = left	CW = clockwise	ct = count
W = woman	R = right	CCW = counter-clockwise	LOD = line of direction

VIRTUAL NEWSLETTERS

In addition to individual websites, a number of Italian-American websites allow you to subscribe to monthly or quarterly email newsletters, usually free. They often encourage submissions of information to be included in upcoming newsletters. Here are a few you might explore. When you subscribe, you can inform them of upcoming folkloric activities in your area!

- The FIERI-NIAF Youth Institute Newsletter, information of professional and personal interest for Italian-Americans, aged 18 to 35, based in Washington, D.C., with affiliate member groups throughout the United States: www.fieri.org

- VIRTUALITALIA.COM, an on-line resource for Italians, Italian Americans and enthusiasts of Italian culture, based in San Francisco, CA:
<http://www.virtualitalia.com>
- Another Italian newsletter free to the public is *About.com*, written by Anthony Parente, at:
<http://italianculture.about.com/index.htm>
- The Italian-American Gazette / La Gazzetta Italo-Americano, the official publication of the Italian American Cultural Society of El Paso, TX:
www.italianclubs.com

BOOK ABOUT SICILIAN CULTURE

As an example, here is a book review, taken from the pages of the email newsletter, *The Italian-American Gazette*:

A Family of Sicilians: Stories and Poems, by Salvatore Amico M. Buttaci, was written so that a positive image of Sicilian-Americans might be projected to Sicilian-Americans and non-Sicilian-Americans as well. "Being proud of my Sicilian roots, I wrote a book of true stories, short stories, and poetry to show others just how proud!" says Buttaci. "I'm happy to say that people of all nationalities are ordering my book and writing me how much they loved reading it!"

Read what happens when crazy old Uncle Tanoots works his best miracle since healing four sick pigs in San Cataldo, Sicily, ... A spirit from the next world visits Grandma and asks her to help save a life, ... A Sicilian nobleman marches off to war, leaving behind his wife and her two sisters walled up safely in his castle tower, ... Grandpa asks his brother-in-law Vincinzu to get his donkey back... A man accused of murder hires a lawyer who has nothing to say, ... **AND MORE!**

A Family of Sicilians: Stories and Poems can be ordered on Amazon.com or BarnesandNoble.com. You can also order the book directly from the author/publisher: Salvatore Buttaci, P.O. Box 887, Saddle Brook, NJ 07663-0887. Make checks payable to Salvatore Buttaci and send it to the above address. The cost of each copy is only \$15.95, which includes shipping and handling within the United States.

FOLK MUSIC'S LAST STAND

by David Witter

Giuseppe Rufo, a one-man band with a bass drum strapped to his back and accordion in hand, plays his way through the streets of Scapoli while a woman begins dancing in the piazza. Cristina Palmiotta, Piero Morabito, Salvatore Vinci and Mark Di Giuseppe play the *tamburello*, *zampogna*, and box respectively, pounding, jumping, and dancing in the street while pedestrian and automobile traffic comes to a standstill.

These images prove that, in an era when most music is electronically enhanced, over-dubbed, or computer-generated, the real thing still exists, at least on the streets of Italy. The reason we know this is because of Chicago folklorist Lionel Bottari. In his documentary film, "Folk Music in Italy," Bottari has captured not only the *zampogna* and *piffero* on film, but the very heart, soul and spirit of the human beings that play Italy's folk music.

"I think that the *zampogna*, in particular, symbolizes a unique but disappearing culture that people have maintained for thousands of years," Bottari says about the video. "These instruments have been used in Italy throughout history, and even pre-history."

In making the video, Bottari traveled to the town of Scapoli, province of Isernia, region of Molise, for the *Mostra-Mercato della Zampogna*, which takes place annually during the final week of July. Taking his camera not only to the stages of the festival, but to the musical celebration in the streets, piazzas, and other gathering areas, he has captured a tapestry of music, colors, faces, and culture.

First and foremost in the video are the instruments themselves. Crude, ancient and made by craftsmen who have passed their trade down through the centuries, they inspire a sense of wonder in musicians and non-musicians alike.

The film begins with a segment highlighting the *bufu*, a percussion instrument made by tying a piece of animal skin to the end of a stick, then spreading it over a drum. A rhythm is created when the musician pushes the stick into the drum in a furious motion that resembles the churning of butter.

Edited by Stephen Ciampaglia of CAN-TV, Chicago, the video also highlights other unique instruments, including the *piffero*, a small double-reeded instrument that looks like a shorter, carved version of an oboe; the *tamburello*, which is like a large tambourine; the *launeddas*, a long, single-reeded Sardinian horn; and the *zampogna*, Italy's version of the bagpipe. Spread throughout Europe by the armies of Rome, these instruments have had a profound influence on the history of music.

It is not hard to trace the roots of the now-popular bagpipe and *badran* of Celtic fame to the *zampogna* and *tamburello*. But the impact of Italian folk music reaches far beyond the instruments themselves, as some of history's greatest composers have been inspired by the artists who played them.

"The Italian folk music tradition has had a tremendous influence on music," Bottari says. "Vivaldi's *Four Seasons* was inspired by the *zampogna*. And with Handel and the music of the Baroque, you can feel the influence of the *contrappunto*, which was created by the people of the mountain villages in Italy."

More important than the instruments, the video captures the energy and joy of the musicians who play them. Segments of the film are devoted to *Gruppo Folcloristico*, the *Bulu* Band, Rocco Melis, *Gruppo Calamus*, Domenico Fusco, and many others. These men and women are all carrying on a tradition that may soon vanish in the quagmire of modernity if something isn't done to arrest the decline.

But just as Celtic music has become popular through groups like the Saw Doctors, and the folk music of southern Louisiana was popularized through zydeco, Bottari is hoping that Italian folk music will find a niche in today's wide array of musical tastes.

"You will probably see the extinction of some of these traditions in our time unless people get into it," Bottari says. "One way that I hope this can happen is that, through this video, people in America will begin to appreciate the music. If that happens, and Italian-Americans embrace their own traditions, I believe that the people of Italy will also take notice."

With scenes like the one in which two older men, one playing the accordion and the other the castanets, walk through the streets of Scapoli as the sun sets and people gather to hear them at a roadside park, Bottari has indeed captured a culture in ways that people will notice and, hopefully, embrace.

Copies of "Folk Music in Italy" are available. For details, please call 312-226-2990.

David Witter is a Chicago public school teacher. Article reprinted from the *Fra Noi* News Service, which is funded in part by a generous grant from the National Italian American Foundation. Those IFAFA members who attended the 1995 IFAFA Conference in Rockford, Illinois, may remember Lionel Bottari who attended that conference and played the *zampogna* for us. Bottari is a frequent contributor to *Fra Noi*, Chicago's well-known Italian newspaper.



Chicago folklorist, Lionel Bottari, is making a last-ditch effort to preserve and promote the folk music of Italy through a new video.

REGIONAL ITALIAN FOLK COSTUMES

We continue the series of descriptions of folk costumes taken from the book, now out of print, *Il Costume popolare in Italia*, by Emma Calderini, published by Sperling & Kupfer, Milano. In this issue, we highlight two costumes from the region of Campania. Colors provided [in brackets] appear in the colorplates, but not in the original Italian description.

Woman of Montaguto

Cloth blouse with lace trimming the collar, and full sleeves, gathered at the wrists with dots of lace. Sleeveless vest of [red-and-yellow] striped cotton, with clasps at the neck and at the waist. Over this is a little [blue] woolen jacket, with separate sleeves attached with [red] brocade ribbons. Full [navy or black] woolen skirt, closely gathered at the waist.

Apron of fancy [light blue] fabric, decorated with [red and green] lace braid trim and tied at the waist with colored ribbons. On the head, a [green] patterned silk scarf. Over the arm is a rectangle of [brown] woolen cloth, decorated with a border of [yellow and black] silk and lace braid trim, for covering the head and shoulders during the winter. Knit stockings. Leather shoes.



Fisherman of Sorrento

Shirt of homespun fabric. [Yellow] Silk vest with metal buttons. Short, fitted pants of green satin [with three metal buttons at the knee]. At the waist, a [red] silk sash. White knit stockings. Low-cut [black] leather shoes, with metal buckles. On the head, a [red] stocking cap. [At the neck, a beige scarf with red and green floral pattern.]



The purpose of the ITALIAN FOLK ART FEDERATION OF AMERICA (IFAFA) is to preserve and foster interest in Italian folk art; to research Italian folklore, traditions, customs, costumes, dances, songs, instruments, etc.; to act as a center for gathering, storing, and disseminating the information; and to bring together Italian folk performing groups and other interested individuals.

IFAFA is an outgrowth of the Italian Folk Art Project initiated at the Nationalities Service Center (NSC) of Philadelphia in 1977. With the assistance of NSC and the leadership and dedication of Cav. Elba Farabegoli Gurzau, IFAFA was incorporated May 7, 1979, in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania as a non-profit cultural and educational organization.

I am interested in:

☐ Membership

☐ Performing Folk Group \$25.00, plus \$5.00 per member address (if new, send for application)

☐ Supporting Organization \$25.00 (non-performing)

☐ Individual \$10.00

☐ Student/Senior Citizen \$5.00

☐ Contributing to the work of IFAFA \$ _____

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