







THE  
NATIONAL HERITAGE  
FELLOWSHIPS  
1990

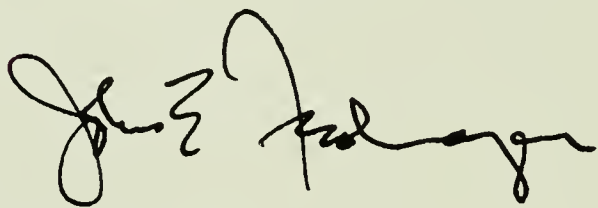
THE NATIONAL ENDOWMENT  
FOR THE ARTS  
FOLK ARTS PROGRAM

## THE NATIONAL HERITAGE FELLOWSHIPS 1990

The poet Jean Toomer once wrote of folk artists "making folk songs from soul sounds." All of the artists honored tonight in these National Heritage Fellowship ceremonies do the same: they make their folk art from the soul.

The 1990 National Heritage Fellowships help bring to greater national attention the talent and diversity of some of America's best artists working in traditional styles and practices. These ceremonies and the presentation of the Fellowships celebrate the skills and excellence of each of these gifted artists. This occasion also underscores the Federal government's commitment to furthering the traditional arts and making them accessible to all.

Thanks go to the Folk Arts Program and to the panelists who recommended this year's National Heritage Fellows, to our partners in the public and private sectors who helped make this concert and the related activities possible, and especially to the thirteen master artists who have put their soul into their work, enhancing and preserving America's traditional arts.



John Frohnmayer  
Chairman  
National Endowment for the Arts

The National Endowment for the Arts, through its Folk Arts Program, welcomes you to the 1990 Heritage Fellowship celebration. This is the ninth such occasion and—as always—it is designed to be a joyous recognition of the creativity and diversity to be found amongst the traditional arts and artists of the United States.

This year there are thirteen artists to be honored from twelve states, speaking altogether more than eight languages. There are five musical instrumentalists, four crafts workers, two singers, four dancers, one poet, one story teller, and two orchestras. (The discrepancy in numbers is caused by the fact that so many traditional artists are actually multi-talented.) They come from Hawaii to the west and New Jersey to the east, from Puerto Rico to the south and Montana to the north. They have been nominated by their neighbors, by other artists, by scholars, by tribal or ethnic associations, and by ordinary citizens. Every one of them is an authentic and exquisitely skilled practitioner of an art form traditional to their own particular heritage, and every one of them has contributed something of especial value to that art form.

The Folk Arts Program is proud to present once again to the American people a sampling of the remarkable and varied art forms that flourish between our borders. These art forms will continue to thrive, even to grow and multiply, to the extent that they are supported, debated, discussed, studied, and analyzed by all Americans, and to the extent that they are exemplified by such stunning artists as the National Heritage Fellows. Please join us in paying tribute to these remarkable exemplars.



Bess Lomax Hawes  
Director  
Folk Arts Program



## CREDITS

The 1990 National Heritage Fellowships ceremonies were produced for the National Endowment for the Arts, Folk Arts Program by the National Council for the Traditional Arts. The ceremonies were planned and coordinated for NCTA by Nicholas Hawes and Camila Bryce-Laporte.

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## 1990 NATIONAL HERITAGE FELLOWS

### HOWARD ARMSTRONG

Howard Armstrong was born in 1909 in Dayton, Tennessee, the middle son in a musically talented family of nine children. His father, also a musician, supported his family by working in the blast furnace section of a local steel mill, where he occasionally was invited to entertain the company executives. By Howard's tenth birthday, his father had taught him to play the mandolin and had whittled out a half-size fiddle for him with a jackknife.

Within five more years, Howard Armstrong had fully entered on a career as a professional musician. He performed with three younger brothers, playing a wide variety of musical styles, before joining with Carl Martin to tour Virginia, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, and Kentucky. The duo played in bars and restaurants, at fish fries, at picnics, and in medicine shows throughout the industrial East, entertaining steel workers and miners from many ethnic groups. They developed an eclectic repertoire of blues and popular music of the day, picking up favorite songs from Italian, Spanish, German, and central European audiences, incidentally developing fluency in many different languages. Today, Howard Armstrong can communicate effectively in at least eight languages, including German, Italian, Greek, Swedish, and Mandarin Chinese.

For a few years, Armstrong attended Tennessee State Normal School as an arts student, playing cello in the symphony and fiddle in the jazz band while he studied painting and design. Later he set up his own sign studio, but he never ceased his life-long exploration of string music. During the 1930's and 1940's, he formed various quartets and trios; during World War II, he worked in automobile plants and body shops in Detroit, until a foot injury put him onto the disability rolls.

In 1972, he rejoined his old friends Carl Martin and guitarist Ted Bogan, with whom he toured as the "last of the black string bands: Martin, Bogan and Armstrong." They played all around the United States, as well as visiting Central and South America and many African nations. They worked together steadily until Martin passed away in 1979. Since that time Howard Armstrong has continued to play, sometimes with his sons or with other old friends. He has appeared at the Smithsonian Festival of American Folklife and the 1988 Festival

of Michigan Folklife. He designed the "juke joint" scene that appeared in the film "The Color Purple," and his own life was the subject of a critically acclaimed documentary film, "Louie Bluie," released in 1985.

Howard Armstrong remains faithful to his extraordinary repertoire of blues, Tin Pan Alley standards, old-country ditties from 19th century Europe, religious hymns, and country dance tunes, reflective of the remarkable reach of his long career and the wide-ranging musicality of the black string band tradition. For his versatility, his clean musicianship, his engaging personality, and his astute observation of the musical scene of this century, Howard Armstrong is a national treasure.

### EM BUN

There are certain crafts which are essential if other associated traditions are to prosper. The making of music, for example, depends upon the making and repair of musical instruments. Less obvious is the critical role of skills such as weaving in cultures where dance, formal ceremony, and proper costumes mark vital episodes in life and work.

Em Bun arrived in the United States as a refugee from Cambodia in 1980, along with her four daughters and two sons. Her maternal ancestors had always been considered the village weavers, and Em Bun learned to weave from her mother when she was about ten years old. She also learned to process the silk from cocoons raised on the family's farmlands. In the United States, however, she could no longer continue her former important, status-filled work as weaver, farmer, and merchant. With a language barrier inhibiting her ability to make new friends, she lapsed into isolation and depression. Her children report that the provision of a loom and weaving materials by a group of interested Pennsylvania women made Em Bun truly happy for the first time in nine years.

Today Em Bun has been recognized as a master weaver by the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts. Grants from the Council have encouraged her daughters to study their mother's art. All her family now wear Em Bun's bright pure silk hand-woven sarong skirts to Cambodian weddings and celebrations. Cambodians in every community along the eastern seaboard are sending orders for their own two meter lengths of silk. She uses



Top:  
Howard Armstrong  
Photo by Bill Pierce

Bottom:  
Em Bun  
Photo © by Blair Seitz

leftover silk thread from a men's tie factory in central Pennsylvania, anointing the materials as she weaves with tapioca and coconut oil to provide the unparalleled luster and sheen of true Cambodian silk.

One Cambodian woman has moved in across the street from Em Bun's home so that she can be near enough to be involved in every aspect of silk weaving. The rhythmic clatter of the beater and the treadles resound throughout the house. Usually it is Em Bun herself at the loom, as she does not believe her apprentices can yet produce work that cannot be detected from her own. Indeed, her talented daughter Pech does not believe she will ever be as good a weaver as her mother because the sound the beater makes when her mother is weaving is so different from hers. There is much still to be learned about the dyeing of the silk, the winding of the raw silk into cones, and the dressing of the warp with its 3,500 single threads. Each of the apprentices has specialized in one part of the elaborate series of skills that make up Cambodian weaving as a master craft.

The subtlety of a master Cambodian weaver is expressed in the basic decisions of which colors enhance others. Although Em Bun's work appears to be mostly solid colors, close examination reveals that the warp threads differ from the weft threads that cross, producing unusual and shimmering hues. Em Bun's exquisite and sensitive work has helped her continue to serve as the "village weaver," although her village now is nationwide. As such, she has helped keep her fellow Cambodians in touch with their heritage and produced another stream of beauty in which her new friends in the United States can also refresh their spirits.

## NATIVIDAD CANO

There is no music more widely evocative of Mexican identity than that traditionally associated with the ensemble known as *mariachi*. The unique and versatile instrumentation of *guitarron* (bass guitar), *vihuela* (small rhythm guitar), violins, and trumpets allows this group to perform a wide variety of music, from the most traditional *sones* (dance pieces) to the latest Latin pop tunes. The *mariachi*'s early beginnings are rooted in the rich heritage of string instruments brought from Spain in the 16th and 17th centuries. It took its current





Top:  
Natividad Cano  
Photo © by Gerard Burkhardt

Bottom:  
Giuseppe and Raffaella DeFranco  
Photo by Martin Koenig,  
Ethnic Folk Arts Center



form in the 19th and 20th centuries through the musical creations of the farmers, ranchers, and *jornaleros* (day laborers) in and around the west Mexican state of Jalisco and its capital city Guadalajara.

Natividad Cano was born in 1933 into a family of jornaleros who lived near Guadalajara in the village of Ahuisculco, Jalisco. His grandfather Catarino Cano was a self-taught guitarron player, and his father Sotero Cano was a versatile musician who was skilled at playing all the mariachi string instruments. In 1939 Natividad's father began teaching the six-year-old to play the vihuela; two years later, "Nati" was enrolled at the Academia de Music in Guadalajara to study the violin. After six years, he left the academy and joined his father, supporting the family by playing in the local cantinas and cafes.

In 1950, Nati persuaded his father to let him travel to the border town of Mexicali to join the Mariachi Chapala. "I have to follow my dreams," he told him. Though the youngest musician in the group by at least ten years, Nati soon became the mariachi's musical arranger. He stayed with Mariachi Chapala for seven years before emigrating in 1960 to Los Angeles. There he joined Mariachi Aguila, the house mariachi at the famous Million Dollar Theatre, a major stopping point on the Mexican professional music circuit. Upon the death of the group's director, Jose Frias, Nati became the new leader and renamed the group "Los Camperos" ("The Countrymen"), the name it has born to this day.

After spending several years touring throughout the United States, Cano and the original six members of Los Camperos settled in Los Angeles in 1967 and opened La Fonda restaurant, at which they have performed five nights a week ever since. La Fonda soon gained a reputation as an important center of Mexican culture in Los Angeles. For Nati, the restaurant became the medium through which he accomplished his personal mission of maintaining high artistic standards while enhancing public awareness of the mariachi tradition.

Over the past decade, Nati has increasingly devoted himself to sharing his musical knowledge with young people and to the cultivation of greater public understanding and respect for the music to which he has devoted his life. In Los Angeles, he has initiated "mariachi-in-education" programs at public schools, lent his name, expertise, and resources to the Hispanic Women's Council's



“Nati Cano Cultural Arts Awards” in the Latin performing arts, and donated his time at numerous concerts to benefit the Mexican community. At the national level, he has been a major figure as teacher, performer, competition judge, and benefactor in the growing number of mariachi festivals throughout the Southwest. Through his steadfast devotion to and love for mariachi music, Natividad Cano has helped to ensure the continued vitality and integrity of this important Mexican-American music tradition.

## GIUSEPPE AND RAFFAELA DEFRANCO

The DeFranco family immigrated to the United States in 1968, finally settling in Belleville, New Jersey near many of their relatives and neighbors from the old country. They came originally from the mountain town of Aciri, in the Cosenza Province in Calabria, the southernmost region of continental Italy, where the *tarantella* was known and enjoyed even in antiquity.

Mr. DeFranco began working as a shepherd at the age of eight and taught his pet goat, Sisina, to dance to the music of the cane flutes he made and decorated. Later he learned the *chitarra battente* (rhythm guitar) with which he serenaded his wife Raffaela, and although he does not consider himself a singer, he composed several very moving love songs to her while they were courting. Today he is master of the *organetto*, a small button accordion popular in southern Italy; sometimes he dances the tarantella with Raffaela while simultaneously playing the organetto. He also plays the *ciaramella*, or wooden oboe, as well as the *zampogna* (bagpipes). He has taught his son, Faust, to play the accordion, the tambourine, the *triccaballacca* (a wooden percussive instrument), and the harmonica. The DeFrancos are often joined in concert by their son and by their long-time friend Franco Cofone, an excellent tambourine player and singer.

Raffaela DeFranco is a remarkable singer with an extensive repertoire of serenades, tarantella verses, religious songs, love songs, and lullabies. She sings in the high-pitched throaty voice typical of southern Italy; she is also proficient in the *villanella*, the Calabrian choral singing style of which she knows several of the special vocal parts

and many beautiful texts and tunes. Her music has been much influenced by that of the Albanian women from nearby villages whose songs she heard when she went out to do day labor in the olive groves and wheat fields. A tarantella verse from Raffaela’s enormous repertoire says:

And she circled and she turned  
and I saw she was alone  
And she circled and she twisted  
and I saw she was escorted  
And she turned another way,  
she was a rose in bloom.

Perhaps the most important feature of the DeFrancos is their self-conscious and dedicated devotion to their traditions. They believe in the vitality, the excellence, the all-around virtue of their music and their dance; they lose no opportunity to advance their cause. It is important to realize that they carry on their art against a continuing drum beat of mild but consistent disapproval from some of the more conventional parts of the Italian-American community, who fear they may present a picture of Italian-Americans as backward or countrified.

But the DeFrancos continue their devotion to the courageous, life-enhancing, life-affirming repertoire of their ancestors. They perform with Calabria Bella, a group of Calabrian musicians from Rhode Island, in addition to actively seeking out other traditional Italian-American artists and encouraging them to remember and to share their traditional culture, regardless of their region of origin. As scholars, practitioners, and savants of the exceptional folk traditions of southern Italy, Raffaela and Giuseppe DeFranco well deserve the gratitude of their people and their nation.

## MAUDE KEGG

Maude Kegg, an eminent craftsworker and storyteller of the Ojibwe people, was born in a bark and cattail mat wigwam in northern Minnesota. She was brought up by her maternal grandmother, a traditionalist who taught her little granddaughter the things she should know of her people and their long history—the language, the myths and tales, the customary beliefs, the traditional skills. Maude Kegg’s mother died in childbirth; her grandmother was never quite sure about the date, so the little girl had to choose her



own birthday. "I was born on land my grandmother homesteaded near Portage Lake," she says now. "I always heard it was riceing time on the lake, so I picked August 26th (the harvest season)."

It was a choice that fit exactly into Maude Kegg's future life style, for she has spent her long career—she is now eighty-six years old—following the ways of her people and sharing them with others. She has written three books on the Ojibwe (sometimes called Chippewa) people: *When I was a Little Girl*, published in 1976, *At the End of the Trail* (1978), and *What My Grandmother Told Me* (1983). She has contributed language data and special Ojibwe terms to scholars of the language. Throughout her lifetime, she has explained and demonstrated the agricultural techniques traditional to the Ojibwe, such as maple sugaring and their special methods of harvesting and processing the wild rice that grows in the northern lake country.

In addition to her exceptional store of traditional Ojibwe tales and legends, Maude Kegg is perhaps best known for the beauty and elegance of her beadwork. She is a master of Ojibwe floral designs and geometric loom beadwork techniques. She is one of the very few Ojibwe still competent to produce a fully beaded traditional bandolier bag, a symbol of prestige and leadership once commonly worn by tribal leaders.

A number of years ago, she and two others completely constructed the large diorama of the seasonal life of the Ojibwe on display in the Minnesota State Historical Society Indian Museum at Mille Lacs, making every artifact included in the exhibit. Since that time she has worked as a staff member of the Museum and often acts as a docent, taking parties of school children and other visitors through the exhibit. Several of her pieces grace the Ojibwe craft collection at the Smithsonian Institution and a Maude Kegg beaded bandolier formed a centerpiece for the important American Federation of Arts' traveling exhibit, "Lost and Found Traditions: Native American Art 1965-1985," curated by Ralph Coe. Mr. Coe writes, "As an influence upon and teacher of the young, as an example to follow and emulate, as both preserver and extender of the correct interpretation of the Ojibwe way, Maude Kegg has made a major contribution to Great Lakes Native culture . . . I am grateful for this opportunity to write on behalf of a notable North American." In 1986 Governor Rudy Perpich of the State of Minnesota proclaimed August 24th of that

year to be "Mrs. Maude Kegg Day" in tribute to "her many years of knowledge, wisdom, and efforts in the preservation of Ojibwe culture and language."

## KEVIN LOCKE

There is a difference between events that survive only inside history books or in paintings and those that still persist in living memory. Archaeologists can replicate stone points for spears and arrows, but they cannot tell us how or when or why they were thrown, nor the dreams that flew along with them. That knowledge is forever gone.

The world has come very close to losing completely an exquisite musical tradition: the Plains and Woodland courting flute. A Lakota Sioux traditionalist writes: "All of us who love our Lakota culture were saddened when we realized in the 60's that the music of our Lakota flute was gone . . . that this instrument paying homage to womanhood was stilled. I cannot express the enormity of the loss that we oldtimers felt when we realized that the last of the flute players had died without teaching the songs and technical artistry to anyone in the next generation."

Fortunately, a number of young Indian musicians were determined to do what could still be done to recapture the art form before it faded entirely from human memory. The Comanche painter and musician Joyce Doc Tate Nevaquaya (recipient of a Heritage Fellowship in 1986), Kiowa/Comanche Tom Mauchahty Ware, and a few other pioneers of this movement began their urgent research during the 1970's and 1980's. Especially prominent in this movement—in part because of the exceptional development and extensive repertoire of the Lakota instrument itself, and in part because of his personal longstanding commitment to traditional Plains Indian art and philosophy—was Kevin Locke, a Hunkpapa Sioux of the Standing Rock Reservation currently residing in Mobridge, South Dakota.

Kevin Locke lived as a young man with an elderly uncle who spoke only Lakota; from him he learned both the language and the traditions of his culture. He learned many of the numerous Sioux courting songs and flute melodies from those who could still remember them and sing them, including Noah Has Horns, Ben Black Bear, and William Horncloud. Today, he continues to regard himself



Top:  
Maud Kegg  
Photo courtesy of the  
Minnesota Historical Society

Bottom:  
Kevin Locke  
Photo by Dan Koeck,  
Minot Daily News, Minot, North Dakota

as a preservationist of the music rather than a stylist or composer of songs. The old people say he is better than the others they remember.

Kevin Locke not only performs and lectures in schools all across the Plains States, he has toured the world, appearing in Canada, China, Spain, and Australia, as well as on tours of African nations sponsored by the State Department. In addition to the courting flute, he sometimes demonstrates the Plains hoop dance, another ancient and honorable Sioux tradition. The dance explicates the Plains Indian world view as the hoops intersect and grow into ever more complex shapes, always and forever returning to the beginning. This articulate and thoughtful artist always tries to bridge the gap between Indian and non-Indian cultures, to bring his audience into the circle of the Lakota Sioux vision. His nomination for a National Heritage Fellowship was supported by his own tribal council, the elders of his community, the faculty of the University of South Dakota (where he is pursuing a Ph.D. in Education), and the South Dakota Arts Council—a remarkable grouping of sponsors that attests to generosity and breadth of Kevin Locke's art.

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## MARIE McDONALD

Marie McDonald spent most of her childhood on the rural island of Molokai in the Hawaiian chain. She is descended from two great traditions: on her mother's side, the Mahoe line of Hawaiian chiefs, and on her father's side, the distinguished Adams family of New England. She journeyed to Texas for her advanced education, earning a degree in art from Texas Women's University; since then, she has lived in Hawaii, where she taught art and Hawaiian Studies for many years in the public schools and where she now owns and operates the Honopua Flower Growers in Waimea, on the big island of Hawaii.

Marie McDonald is not only the best known practitioner on the islands of the art of Hawaiian lei making, she is also its primary scholar. Her research and documentation of the tradition in her significant and lovely book, *Ka Lei—the Leis of Hawaii* (Press Pacifica, 1985), is the authoritative source on the topic. Even more recently, she conducted field research on lei traditions associated with Hawaiian ranching, finally locating a lei maker on Maui who could tell her about the leis







Top:  
 Marie McDonald  
 Photo courtesy of Smithsonian  
 Institution

Bottom:  
 Wallace McRae  
 Photo by Michael Korn



formerly made of sisal fiber scraps—the *lei malino*. At her own ranch on the Big Island, she experiments regularly with the raising of older plants and flowers. Today, almost every lei stand includes the subtler traditional leis researched by Mrs. McDonald alongside those made from the more recently introduced flowers such as orchids, carnations, and plumeria.

Marie McDonald not only constructs beauty with her experienced hands and eyes, she speaks of her fragile art form with enormous eloquence. “Why must visual beauty last forever?” she writes. “What is wrong with short-lived beauty? Is it less beautiful than any other kind of beauty?” She points out that the moment of giving is the moment of love; the lei offered must then be at its peak of beauty, so that both giver and receiver experience that moment of shared love at its fullest. She speaks of leis as exemplifying arms entwined about another person’s neck—mother and child, lover and beloved, friend and friend.

It is known that all peoples in all historical times have enveloped their bodies with decoration. In some fortunate parts of the world this universal impulse has reached special heights. The sweet ginger necklaces of the wet forests and the fragile pupu shell leis of the arid island of Niihau are only part of the dazzling displays of color, fragrance, and sculptural charm for which the Hawaiian Islands are known around the world—a treasured tradition that Marie McDonald has both guarded and enhanced.

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## WALLACE MCRAE

Wallace McRae, the cowboy poet, is a third generation rancher from the Rosebud Creek area near Colstrip, Montana in the southeastern part of the state. His family’s ranch is bordered on the east by the Tongue River and lies just north of the Northern Cheyenne Indian Reservation. Both of his parents were born and raised on Rosebud Creek, and his family has run sheep and cattle in these parts since 1885.

Mr. McRae is a working cowboy and a working rancher. Born in 1936, he attended college at Montana State University, where he received a Bachelor of Science degree in zoology. In 1958, he was commissioned as a Naval Officer and served in the Atlantic and Mediterranean Fleets. After his father died in 1960, he returned to Montana with



his wife, Ruth Hayes; they have three children and continue to live on Rosebud Creek in the vicinity of the old family ranch.

The men and women who prospected, farmed, mined, fished, hauled, hunted, built, explored, and ranched across the North American continent during the nineteenth century were not simply people of action—they were also people of words. They left records behind them: diaries, letters, journals, and even such fripperies as new words to old tunes. They especially often left poetry. Indeed, as settlements built up in the wake of their exploratory adventures, a tradition of public recitations sprang up, featuring narrative poems that recounted great adventures and comic events. Soon a new “frontier” style of poetry began to emerge from the pens of writers like Robert W. Service and from the imaginations of working cowboys and ranchers. Wallace McRae was born into such a poetic tradition: his first public recitation was a “Christmas piece,” delivered at the local one-room schoolhouse that his sisters attended when he was four years old.

Since then, Mr. McRae has written more than 100 poems, among them the enormously successful “Reincarnation,” a poem destined to outlive him—even in his lifetime it has passed into the oral repertoire and is recited by cowboys who never met the author. His poems have also been circulated through his three books, *It’s Just Grass and Water*, *Up North is Down the Crick*, and *Things of Intrinsic Worth*. Like the tradition he honors, he has written not only on humorous and romantic topics but on matters of public concern as well, such as the need for environmental protection and the effects of strip mining in the West. Another group of poems such as “A Conversation with Albert” deal with his neighbors the Cheyennes.

Some National Heritage Fellows are honored because they have preserved for the nation an ancient traditional repertoire. Wallace McRae has preserved an ancient traditional artistic practice: the writing of narrative poetry detailing the problems and issues of a particular time in unforgettable language and memorable forms. Through his work, we can continue to thrill to the spoken word—the impact of the genuine oral tradition, where gifted poets speak a community’s truth back to the people themselves for their further consideration, for their greater understanding, and for their inspiration.

## ART MOILANEN

Art Moilanen was born in 1916. His parents came from northern Finland early in the twentieth century as part of that era’s enormous immigration of more than 300,000 Finns to the mines, mills, and factories of the United States. Half that number eventually arrived in the western Great Lakes region, particularly in Minnesota’s Mesabi Iron Range and the Michigan “Copper Country.” In July 1913, the Western Federation of Miners called a strike for a shorter work day and higher wages against Upper Michigan’s mining companies. Although supported strongly by the local Finnish population, the strike was bitter, violent, and unsuccessful. At its close, along with other Finnish families, the Moilanens moved to the region near Mass City, Michigan, where they farmed and worked in the woods. That is where Art Moilanen grew up and where he still lives. It was, and is, a marginally logging area: “I grew up with sawdust in my ears,” he says now.

But there was music in his ears as well. Art learned harmonica as a boy, graduating later to button accordion and later still to the larger and more showy piano accordion he now plays. He learned Finnish tunes from recordings, touring performers, and from the singing of neighboring lumberjacks and miners, and by his teens he was playing for dances. After serving in the Air Force for four years during World War II, Art returned to Michigan to form his own logging crews in the White Pine papermill district. In 1965, he decided to retire from logging and bought a tavern near Mass City where, as he remembers it, there was “dancing three, four nights a week, sometimes all day and night long—it was just packed all the time.” At the age of sixty he retired again and purchased “Art’s Bar” in nearby Mass City, along with an adjacent motel catering to hunters and maintenance crews. He ran the two establishments until a few years ago, when he sold out and made a third attempt to retire.

It is difficult, though, to tell just how well he has succeeded. He continues to play music for dances with great regularity, performing always to packed houses. As Dr. Michael Loukinen of Northern Michigan University, a well-known scholar of Finnish traditions, points out: “The last time Art retired, he had so many requests to play at weddings and parties that he had to retire from



Top:  
Art Moilanen  
Photo by Alan Kamuda  
Courtesy of Michigan Traditional Arts Program,  
Michigan State University Museum

Bottom:  
Emilio Rosado  
Photo by Walter Murray Chiesa



retirement and try to find relaxation by working full time." Among other options to fill his time, he continues to teach younger accordionists on a regular basis, insisting always that they include the folk melodies of the Scandinavian immigrants in their repertoires.

Art Moilanen has taken on a role of great importance in the northern European immigrant communities around the Great Lakes, maintaining, displaying, and rejoicing in the sturdy musical tradition of waltzes, polkas, schottisches, and other folk dances of Scandinavia, especially Finland. His work is rooted firmly in the best of this tradition. He stands on the same floor level as his audiences and wears everyday clothes, "just like everybody else." Although his repertoire is classically Finnish, he also chooses music from others of his neighbors, including country and western players. A fine instrumentalist of great virtuosity and skill, he thinks more about what he plays than how brilliantly he plays it, for he is concerned with inclusion; his tradition might be called ethnic-American-regional-working-class dance music, or perhaps, simply "people's music." At an Art Moilanen dance, the people will be out there dancing.

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## EMILIO ROSADO

Don Emilio Rosado was born in the municipality of Utuado on the island of Puerto Rico in 1911. They say that the moment he was born, all the neighborhood roosters began to crow, and they crowed on and on until they became hoarse, honoring the infant who was to become the greatest bird carver in Puerto Rican history.

Don Emilio comes from a family of carvers. His grandfather's brother, Tacio Ponce, carved oxen yokes and machete handles for a living and walking sticks as a hobby. His father carved all the handles for his tools, and his brother carved as well. Don Emilio himself began carving around the age of fourteen, mostly small animals or balls to play with; sometimes when he was learning, he would carve on a soft sweet potato until he mastered the form he wanted. His first sale brought \$5.00 for a dove.

But it was when he turned to the carving of roosters that he began to establish his importance as a major Puerto Rican craftsman. He has carved literally thousands of the birds since that time, and



an Emilio Rosado rooster carving is immediately identifiable to the experienced eye. The eminent authority on Puerto Rican crafts, Walter Murray Chiesa, points out that although Don Emilio carves *santos* such as the Three Kings, wooden machetes, and small barnyard animal figures, it is when he carves his favorite roosters that he truly comes into his own. He raises the birds himself and loves to talk about the different varieties of rooster, their varied shapes, colors, tail feathers, and the angle of beak and comb. Occasionally he will have one of his sons hold a bird in his hand so that he can study its special qualities as he carves. In the end, he will have not an exact copy, but a representation of a particular bird seen through the eyes of an artist.

Don Emilio's birds are carved from a single piece of cedar, sometimes mounted on a separate piece of wood that serves as a base, sometimes free standing. Each shows the long free swoop of line from the bird's crest through to the tip of the tail feathers that is so characteristic of his work. The Institute of Puerto Rican culture owns a collection of at least forty of Don Emilio's carved cocks; the Institute has invited him to join their sculpture division, but he prefers to remain an independent artisan working among his beloved roosters in his home town of Utuado. His workshop smells enchantingly of cedar. "Cedar," according to Don Emilio, "is a special wood with a special story. When you cut down a cedar tree there is always a small hollow inside; that is where the Blessed Virgin hid on the flight from Egypt. And that is why cedar smells so wonderfully good too."

It is rare that an important symbol can be traced to the work of a living individual artist. According to Walter Murray Chiesa, the objects most widely recognized as symbolic of Puerto Rican culture are the carnival masks of Ponce, the indigenous stringed instrument the *cuatro*, and the carved roosters of Don Emilio Rosado. In 1982, he was designated "Master Craftsman of the Year" by the Government of Puerto Rico; in his own personage, he has become symbolic of the craft and folk heritage of his beautiful island.

## ROBERT SPICER

Robert Spicer was born in Dickson County, Tennessee, in 1921, the youngest of nine children.

He has lived in the area ever since. His lifetime pursuit of flatfoot or buck dancing began when he was seven years old and visiting the nearby town of Charlotte with his mother. He can remember the moment to this day: "I seen a black man dancing on the bed of a two-horse wagon. I just stood there eating an ice cream cone and watched how he was doing it and listened to the rhythm he was making. I decided that I was gonna learn to do that . . ." Apparently, the little boy never looked back.

The dance style that so fascinated Mr. Spicer undoubtedly originated in Africa, where ground-hugging, improvised dancing still thrives. In the United States, these relaxed, subtle African styles combined easily with articulated Celtic foot-stepping to produce American flatfooting, a dance that is widespread today throughout the South on both sides of the color line. Flatfoot is an improvised solo dance, characterized by fast percussive footwork that stays close to the floor and often duplicates the rhythm of the accompanying instruments. The feet seem to be used "all of a piece," the body is erect but not stiff, the arms move gently in response to the need for balance. Any kind of showy athleticism—jumping, leaping, high kicking—is inappropriate; the dancers strive for economy, neatness and simplicity of movement, and always for rhythmic precision of the highest order.

Flatfoot dancing is also called rhythmic buck dancing. The origin of the latter name is still mysterious. Older black dancers sometimes say that there were 37 named steps in a complete buck dance, steps that mimed the entire life cycle of the black man. Mr. Spicer knows a few named steps—"Cutting the Grass," "Shining your Shoes," "Rock the Cradle," "The Wing," "The Old Time Double Back Step." Accompaniment is an important part of the dance. Lacking instruments, Mr. Spicer claps for his dancers or plays the spoons, each instrument beat to be echoed by a foot sound. Essentially he provides what some call a "juba" rhythm, a black contribution in which the hands clap twice on the upbeat and the foot stamps once on the downbeat. Like black gospel singers who clap in parts, producing bass, baritone, and treble pitches in their clapping, Mr. Spicer "tunes" his claps to correspond to the musical effects produced by the dancer he is accompanying.

For Robert Spicer is above all a consummate teacher. He has won many flatfoot contests during his lifetime, he has learned to call squares from his



Top:  
Robert Spicer  
Photo by Jacky R. Christian, courtesy of the  
Old-Time Music & Dance Foundation.

Bottom:  
Doug Wallin  
Photo by Jeffrey Smith,  
The News Record, Marshall, North Carolina



former neighbor, Fiddling Arthur Smith, and he has supplemented his income by working as a professional dance caller and dance organizer at musical clubs throughout Tennessee. But most of all, he has taught in the old-fashioned way, setting up the right atmosphere, the proper surroundings for flatfoot dancing, in public parks and community centers across middle Tennessee. Day after day he meets prospective students, providing what Tennessee Folk Arts Coordinator Roby Cogswell calls “immersion in customary example” and endless practice for his neophytes. Mr. Spicer provides sensitive accompaniment with his deceptively simple hand claps, along with positive or negative reactions and patient reassurance. He also helps his dancers move into showier venues of public presentation, although he continues to oppose the mechanized precision clogging routines of public square dance troupes.

Robert Spicer has led the way in preserving the earliest dance styles of Tennessee’s black and white settlers. He is a local as well as a national treasure.

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## DOUGLAS WALLIN

There are people who say that Doug Wallin is quite simply the finest living singer of unaccompanied British ballads in southern Appalachia. It is a tradition that runs in his family: he learned most of his songs from his mother and father, the late Berzilla and Lee Wallin, from his uncle Cas Wallin, and from other friends and neighbors in Madison County, North Carolina.

Berzilla Wallin used to speak of the visit of the world-famous English ballad collector Cecil Sharp some seventy-five years ago. She remembered it plain as day, and apparently the visit impressed the scholar as well. He described the Sodom-Laurel section of Madison County where the Wallin family lived as “a community in which singing was as common and almost as universal a practice as speaking.” Indeed some years ago, the Folk Arts Program at the National Endowment for the Arts received a nomination recommending that the entire population of the Sodom-Laurel area receive a single National Heritage award, since it was so obviously a local tradition held in trust by all the residents.

It was later determined that such a nomination was not legally practical—an individual, such as



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Doug Wallin, must stand as representative of the entire community. Actually, this is very fitting for the repertoire itself, since the surviving ancient British ballads in this country are always sung as solo accounts of long ago, although they have been edited in the subtlest of way by the hundreds of voices and minds that have passed them along.

It is a rare experience to hear an unaccompanied song, much less a ballad or story song. The singer has so little to work with: a simple, usually four-line rhyming stanza with an occasional brief refrain; a brief melody that repeats with each verse; some powerful and evocative tales that touch the main themes of love, death, betrayal, and loss that so excite that European listener; the refined and knowing use of poetic repetition and subtly shifting stresses. But a well-sung ballad—one of the great ones—by an experienced singer can, as one listener put it, “lift the hair right off your head.”

Doug Wallin is such a singer. He is a quiet and modest man who not only sings the songs, but also tells the stories. And he is also a fine fiddle player. He has looked into the scholarship about his tradition as well, and he prides himself on the completeness and complexity of his repertoire. In 1988, the Governor of North Carolina announced a program of North Carolina Folk Heritage Awards to bring public recognition to “our native sons and daughters who perform the traditional arts of North Carolina with great distinction and skill.” Doug Wallin was one of the first North Carolina artists so honored.

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# THE NATIONAL HERITAGE FELLOWS 1982-1989

## 1982

**Dewey Balfa**  
Cajun Fiddler  
Basile, LA

**Joe Heaney\***  
Irish Singer  
Brooklyn, NY

**Tommy Jarrell\***  
Appalachian  
Fiddler  
Mt. Airy, NC

**Bessie Jones\***  
Georgia Sea  
Island Singer  
Brunswick, GA

**George Lopez**  
Santos  
Woodcarver  
Cordova, NM

**Brownie McGhee**  
Blues Guitarist  
Oakland, CA

**Hugh McGraw**  
Shape Note  
Singer  
Bremen, GA

**Lydia Mendoza**  
Mexican-  
American Singer  
Houston, TX

**Bill Monroe**  
Bluegrass  
Musician  
Nashville, TN

**Elijah Pierce\***  
Carver/Painter  
Columbus, OH

**Adam Popovich**  
Tamburitza  
Musician  
Dolton, IL

**Georgeann  
Robinson\***  
Osage Ribbon-  
worker  
Bartlesville, OK

**Duff Severe**  
Saddle Maker  
Pendleton, OR

**Philip Simmons**  
Ornamental  
Ironworker  
Charleston, SC

**Sanders "Sonny"  
Terry\***  
Blues Musician  
Holliswood, NY

## 1983

**Sister Mildred  
Barker\***  
Shaker Singer  
Poland Springs,  
ME

**Rafael Cepeda**  
Bomba Musician/  
Dancer  
Santurce, PR

**Ray Hicks**  
Appalachian  
Storyteller  
Banner Elk, NC

**Stanley Hicks\***  
Appalachian  
Musician/Story-  
teller/Instrument  
Maker  
Vilas, NC

**John Lee Hooker**  
Blues Guitarist/  
Singer  
San Carlos, CA

**Mike Manteo\***  
Sicilian  
Marionettist  
Staten Island, NY

**Narciso Martinez**  
Texas-Mexican  
Accordionist/  
Composer  
San Benito, TX

**Lanier Meaders**  
Potter  
Cleveland, GA

**Almeda Riddle\***  
Ballad Singer  
Greens Ferry, AR

**Simon St. Pierre**  
French-American  
Fiddler  
Smyrna Mills, ME

**Joe Shannon**  
Irish Piper  
Chicago, IL

**Alex Stewart\***  
Cooper/Wood-  
worker  
Sneedville, TN

**Ada Thomas**  
Chitimacha  
Basketmaker  
Charenton, LA

**Lucinda Toomer\***  
Black Quilter  
Columbus, GA

**Lem Ward\***  
Decoy Carver/  
Painter  
Crisfield, MD

**Dewey Williams**  
Shape Note  
Singer  
Ozark, AL

## 1984

**Clifton Chenier\***  
Creole Accordi-  
onist  
Lafayette, LA

**Bertha Cook\***  
Knotted  
Bedsread Maker  
Boone, NC

**Joseph Cormier**  
Cape Breton  
Violinist  
Waltham, MA

**Elizabeth Cotton\***  
Black Songster/  
Songwriter  
Syracuse, NY

**Burlon Craig**  
Potter  
Vale, NC

**Albert Fahlbusch**  
Hammered  
Dulcimer Maker/  
Player  
Scottsbluff, NE

**Janie Hunter**  
Black Singer/  
Storyteller  
Johns Island, SC

**Mary Jane  
Manigault**  
Black Seagrass  
Basket Maker  
Mt. Pleasant, SC

**Genevieve Mougín**  
Lebanese-  
American Lace  
Maker  
Bettendorf, IA

**Martin Mulvihill\***  
Irish-American  
Fiddler  
Bronx, NY

**Howard  
"Sandman" Sims**  
Black Tap Dancer  
New York, NY

**Ralph Stanley**  
Appalachian  
Banjo Player/  
Singer  
Coeburn, VA

**Margaret Tafoya**  
Santa Clara  
Pueblo Potter  
Espanola, NM

**Dave Tarras\***  
Klezmer  
Clarinetist  
Brooklyn, NY

**Paul Tiulana**  
Eskimo Mask-  
maker/Dancer/  
Singer  
Anchorage, AK

**Cleofes Vigil**  
Hispanic  
Storyteller/Singer  
San Cristobal, NM

**Emily Kau'i  
Zuttermeister**  
Hula Master  
Kaneohe, HI

## 1985

**Eppie Archuleta**  
Hispanic Weaver  
San Luis Valley,  
CO

**Periklis Halkias**  
Greek Clarinetist  
Astoria, Queens, NY

**Jimmy Jausoro**  
Basque  
Accordionist  
Boise, ID

**Mealii Kalama**  
Hawaiian Quilter  
Honolulu, HI

**Lily May Ledford\***  
Appalachian  
Musician/Singer  
Lexington, KY

**Leif Melgaard**  
Norwegian  
Woodcarver  
Minneapolis, MN

**Bua Xou Mua**  
Hmong Musician  
Portland, OR

**Julio Negrón-  
Rivera**  
Puerto Rican  
Instrument Maker  
Morovis PR

**Alice New Holy  
Blue Legs**  
Lakota Sioux  
Quill Artist  
Oglala, SD

**Glenn Ohrlin**  
Cowboy Singer/  
Storyteller/  
Illustrator  
Mountain View,  
AR

**Henry Townsend**  
Blues Musician/  
Songwriter  
St. Louis, MO

**Horace "Spoons"  
Williams\***  
Spoons/Bones  
Player/Poet  
Philadelphia, PA

## 1986

**Alfonse "Bois Sec"  
Ardoin**  
Black Creole  
Accordionist  
Eunice, LA

**Earnest Bennett**  
Anglo-American  
Whittler  
Indianapolis, IN

**Helen Cordero**  
Pueblo Potter  
Cochiti, NM

**Sonia Domsch**  
Czech-American  
Bobbin Lace  
Maker  
Atwood, KS

**Canray Fontenot**  
Black Creole  
Fiddler  
Welsh, LA

**John Jackson**  
Black Songster/  
Guitarist  
Fairfax Station, VA

**Peou Khatna**  
Cambodian Court  
Dancer/  
Choreographer  
Silver Spring, MD

**Valerio Longoria**  
Mexican-  
American  
Accordionist  
San Antonio, TX

**Joyce Doc Tate**  
Nevaquaya  
Comanche Indian  
Flutist  
Apache, OK

**Luis Ortega**  
Hispanic-  
American  
Rawhide Worker  
Paradise, CA

**Ola Belle Reed**  
Appalachian  
Banjo Picker/  
Singer  
Rising Sun, MD

**Jenny Thlunaut\***  
Tlingit Chilkat  
Blanket Weaver  
Haines, AK

**Nimrod Workman**  
Appalachian  
Ballad Singer  
Mascot, TN/  
Chattaroy, WV

## 1987

**Juan Alindato**  
Carnival  
Maskmaker  
Ponce, PR

**Louis Bashell**  
Slovenian  
Accordionist/  
Polka Master  
Greenfield, WI

**Genoveva  
Castellanoz**  
Mexican-  
American Corona  
Maker  
Nyssa, OR

**Thomas Edison  
"Brownie" Ford**  
Anglo-Comanche  
Cowboy Singer/  
Storyteller  
Hebert, LA

**Kansuma Fujima**  
Japanese-  
American Dancer  
Los Angeles, CA

**Claude Joseph  
Johnson\***  
African-American  
Religious Singer/  
Orator  
Atlanta, GA

**Raymond Kane**  
Hawaiian Slack  
Key Guitarist/  
Singer  
Wai'anae, HI

**Wade Mainer**  
Appalachian  
Banjo Picker/  
Singer  
Flint, MI

**Sylvester  
McIntosh**  
Crucian Singer/  
Bandleader  
St. Croix, VI

**Allison "Totie"  
Montana**  
Mardi Gras Chief/  
Costume Maker  
New Orleans, LA

**Alex Moore, Sr.\***  
African-American  
Blues Pianist  
Dallas, TX

**Emilio and  
Senaída Romero**  
Hispanic-  
American Crafts-  
workers in Tin  
and Embroidery  
Santa Fe, NM

**Newton  
Washburn**  
Split Ash  
Basketmaker  
Littleton, NH

## 1988

**Pedro Ayala**  
Mexican-  
American  
Accordionist  
Donna, TX

**Kepka Belton**  
Czech-American  
Egg Painter  
Ellsworth, KS

**Amber Densmore**  
New England  
Quilter/Needle-  
worker  
Chelsea, VT

**Michael Flatley**  
Irish-American  
Stepdancer  
Palos Park, IL

**Sister Rosalia  
Haberl**  
German-American  
Bobbin Lace-  
maker  
Hankinson, ND

**John Dee Holeman**  
African-American  
Dancer/Musician/  
Singer  
Durham, NC

**Albert "Sunnyland  
Slim" Luandrew**  
African-American  
Blues Pianist/  
Singer  
Chicago, IL

**Yang Fang Nhu**  
Hmong Weaver/  
Embroiderer  
Detroit, MI

**Kenny Sidle**  
Anglo-American  
Fiddler  
Newark, OH

**Willie Mae Ford  
Smith**  
African-American  
Gospel Singer  
St. Louis, MO

**Clyde "Kindy"  
Sproat**  
Hawaiian Cow-  
boy Singer/  
Ukulele Player  
Kapa'au, HI

**Arthel "Doc"  
Watson**  
Appalachian  
Guitar Player/  
Singer  
Deep Gap, NC

## 1989

**John Cephas**  
Piedmont Blues  
Guitarist/Singer  
Woodford, VA

**The Fairfield Four**  
African-American  
a capella Gospel  
Singers  
Nashville, TN

**Jose Gutierrez**  
Mexican Jarocho  
Musician/Singer  
Norwalk, CA

**Richard Avedis  
Hagopian**  
Armenian Oud  
Player  
Visalia, CA

**Christy Hengel**  
German-American  
Concertina Maker  
New Ulm, MN

**Ilias Kementzides**  
Pontic Greek Lyra  
Player  
Norwalk, CT

**Ethel Kvalheim**  
Norwegian  
Rosemaler  
Stoughton, WI

**Vanessa  
Paukeigope  
Morgan**  
Kiowa Regalia  
Maker  
Anadarko, OK

**Mabel E. Murphy**  
Anglo-American  
Quilter  
Fulton, MO

**LaVaughn E.  
Robinson**  
African-American  
Tapdancer  
Philadelphia, PA

**Earl Scruggs**  
Bluegrass Banjo  
Player  
Madison, TN

**Harry V. Shourds**  
Wildfowl Decoy  
Carver  
Seaville, NJ

**Chesley Goseyun  
Wilson**  
Apache Fiddle  
Maker  
Tucson, AZ

\* (deceased)





