

Arts & Entertainment

A weekly guide to music, theater, art, movies and more, edited by Rebecca Wallace

The 3 Martins will play classic rock and blues on the corner of University Avenue and High Street from 6:30 to 8 p.m. on June 21.



Hawaiian-born pop singer Melissa Rapp performs from 6:30 to 8 at University Avenue and Ramona Street.



Veronica Weber

Above: Late Notice brings on the jazz and funk from 5 to 6:30 at 171 University. Above right: Traditional French musician Alan Keith, photographed in his Mountain View home, plays with his band Les Campagnards at Lytton Plaza from 5 to 6:30 (with Mad Molly doing molly dancing around 6:20).

French bagpipes, acoustic guitars, harps and horns will serenade downtown for Palo Alto World Music Day

by Rebecca Wallace

Bagpipes are big with Alan Keith, who has about 30 of the instruments in his Mountain View home. Some hang on the walls; some are under the bed. Even an instrument that shrinks when you let the air out of it takes up space.

Keith plays in a Celtic band, so when he breaks out the bagpipes a visitor could be forgiven for expecting something, well, plaid.

But today Keith is thinking about World Music Day, a multi-country musical festival that's happening in Palo Alto for the first time this year. The festival originated in France, so it's fitting that Keith will play there in a Gallic guise. He'll perform on June 21 with another one of his bands, the traditional French music and dance group Les Campagnards.

And the bagpipes he's now displaying in his living room are French. One has a tapestry bagcover and pipes of African

blackwood, and a carved ivory scrimshaw picture of a rooster, the symbol of the republic of France. Another has a sculpted Statue of Liberty head, which is fitting for an American musician with a penchant for French music.

Yes, Virginie, there are bagpipes in France. (Keith also has bagpipes from England, Sweden, Belgium, the Netherlands, Spain and Turkey.) One of the reasons Keith enjoys performing traditional French music is getting to educate people about it. Contrary to stereotype, it's not just Parisian café-style songs by Edith Piaf and Maurice Chevalier.

"That's like people around the world thinking of American music as (just) jazz and rock," Keith said.

France is a big country, and the countryside tunes favored by Les Campagnards reflect a diversity of influences. Regional rondo and bourrée dances combine with ballroom's waltzes, mazurkas and schottisches. Accordions and violins add to the spirited sound.



Los Altos native Cello Joe, a hip-hop cellist recently profiled in the Weekly, will perform at World Music Day from 6:30 to 8 p.m. at 301 University Ave.

Dana Ullman

Strike up the bands

These tunes will be swirled into quite a bouillabaisse on June 21, when Palo Alto's World Music Day, a free outdoor festival, hosts 42 musical acts downtown from 5 to 8 p.m.

Les Campagnards — whose other core members are Gary Breitbard, Jena Rauti and Peter Tommerup — will play at Lytton Plaza on University Avenue. They may wear costumes, and they'll definitely share the space with Mad Molly, who will show off the English seasonal dance form molly dancing around 6:20 p.m.

Another lively location will be King Plaza in front of City Hall at 250 Hamilton Ave. That's where four big choral groups will perform: M'EarthTones, World Harmony Chorus, Peninsula Harmony Chorus and The Peninsulaires barbershop-harmony group.

Meanwhile, a broad array of other artists will play on street corners and in other plazas (University Avenue will not be closed to car traffic). A sampling of the 5-6:30 p.m. lineup: Palo Alto-based Celtic/American folk duo Four Shillings Short; Palo Alto blues/folk/bluegrass band John Henry's

Farm; klezmer band Hot Kugel; Wobbly World, which plays flamenco/Arabic/Bulgarian music; the indie rock band Jackie Joyner; and the Palo Alto blues/folk group Sugaree & the Shakedown.

Between 6:30 and 8, some of the acts are: hip-hop cellist Cello Joe, Chinese folk group Sounds of China; Eire Firths, who plays Irish, Scottish and Tasmanian folk; the Melissa Dinwiddie Jazz Combo, classic rock & blues band The 3 Martins; and the Balkan vocal group Born to Drone.

Much of the music will be acoustic, with some performers bringing battery-operated amplifiers. Organizer Claude Ezran said one of his biggest projects was planning out performer locations to minimize music overlap.

"I tried to put louder musicians more on the periphery," he said.

Ezran has been leading the evening's organization with fellow Palo Alto resident and Human Relations Commission member Olana Hirsch Khan. He's pleased with the lineup, although he'd like to see more young musicians on the bill next year.

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Steve Lucky and the Rhumba Bums play jump blues, swing and jazz at the Mitchell Park Bowl on June 16.



David Brock sings with his Doors tribute band Wild Child on California Avenue on June 30.

Flambeau, July 16; Celtic and early-music quintet Broceliande, July 23; and Parisian-music band Baguette Quartette, July 30.

For more about the series, go to www.cityofpaloalto.org and click on "Arts, Parks & Recreation."

Meanwhile, free summer jazz continues at Stanford Shopping Center, on Thursdays from 6 to 7:30 p.m. near Neiman Marcus through Aug. 6. The next scheduled performers are the cabaret musicians of Vagabond Opera, on June 18. Go to stanfordshop.com.

Other nearby cities holding free outdoor shows include Menlo Park, which holds its series downtown in Fremont Park at University Drive and Santa Cruz Avenue, Wednesdays from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. Johnny Cash tribute band Rusty Evans & Ring of Fire starts things off on June 24; the series runs through Aug. 12. Call 650-330-2200.

In Mountain View, summer concerts go from July 9 through Aug. 20 from 6:30 to 8 p.m., on Castro Street in Cuesta or Rengstorff parks. The first act is the Joe Sharino Band on Castro at Dana Street, with pop, rock, Motown and other styles. For more about the series, go to www.ci.mtnview.ca.us and click on "Community Events" under Library, Arts, Parks & Rec." ■

More music alfresco

Cities kick off free summer concerts

by Rebecca Wallace

After the sun sets on World Music Day, there's still a summer-full of free outdoor concerts on the Midpeninsula.

Barring any last-minute budget cutting, the City of Palo Alto's two annual series will be starting soon. The Twilight Concert Series takes place from 6:30 to 8 p.m. on Tuesdays, June 16 through Aug. 4, while the Brown Bag concerts are off and running on July 9, from noon to 1 p.m. on Thursdays through July 30.

(Palo Alto's City Council is set to adopt the new city budget June 15. There's often talk about shortening the concert series to save money, but the council is expected to keep the events in the budget.)

Steve Lucky and the Rhumba Bums start up the Twilight series with jump blues, swing and jazz on June 16 at Mitchell Park Bowl, 600 E. Meadow Drive. The next

week, the Jessie Turner Band plays pop rock at Peers Park, 1899 Park Blvd.

On June 30, Doors tribute band Wild Child performs on California Avenue between Ash and Birch streets. Native Elements plays reggae and R&B on July 7 at Mitchell Park Bowl, with Steely Dan tribute band Aja Vu on July 14 at Rinconada Park Bowl, 777 Embarcadero Road.

The three remaining Twilight acts are: rock band Luce, July 21, Mitchell Park Bowl; Latin dance band Los Pinguos, July 28, Rinconada Park Bowl; and R&B's Lydia Pense and Cold Blood, Aug. 4, Mitchell Park Bowl.

Four bands are slated for the Brown Bag shows, which are in Cogswell Plaza at Lytton Avenue and Ramona Street: male a cappella group Hookslide, July 9; Cajun-music act Tom Rigney and

World music

(continued from page 21)

World Music Day performers are playing for free, and the city has also waived permitting and policing costs for the event, Ezran said. "I've had incredible support from the city."

A host of volunteers are also keeping things rolling. Ezran says he could use some more to help welcome musicians, monitor pedestrian safety, and survey spectators to see how things could go better next

year.

If World Music Day takes off in Palo Alto, it'll join a long-running tradition. The French Ministry of Culture started World Music Day in France 27 years ago; the event now happens on the day of the summer solstice in about 100 countries each year.

According to the official French website, fetedelamusique.culture.fr, the day "allows the expression of all styles of music in a cheerful atmosphere. ... It gives an opportunity to

communicate and share a very special moment through music."

For Alan Keith, who has been to France a number of times for music festivals, the country's vibrant festival scene is a welcome sign of government support for the arts. He's clearly pleased that World Music Day is coming here.

And he says his band's lively festive rural music will fit right in outdoors. Bagpipes and accordions aren't exactly sedate parlor pieces, he says. "These are rough and ready peasant instruments. One instrument could carry a whole dance." ■

What: The first Palo Alto World Music Day festival features 42 musical acts, including rock, folk, blues, choral, classical, klezmer, harmonica, gospel, French, Celtic, Chinese and Eastern European music.

Where: Various outdoor locations in downtown Palo Alto: University Avenue, King Plaza at City Hall (250 Hamilton Ave.) and other nearby streets

When: Sunday, June 21, from 5 to 8 p.m.

Cost: Free

Info: For more about the Palo Alto festival, including details about volunteering, go to www.pamusicday.org. Other Bay Area locations for World Music Day include San Jose, which hosts its own free festival on June 20. Go to www.sanjosejazz.org.

It's hard to complain about an evening of Balkan-Yiddish-gospel-postmodern music. But where's the big free outdoor theater festival? For a call to bring on the Beckett in Palo Alto, read arts editor Rebecca Wallace's blog, **Ad Libs**, at blog.paloaltoonline.com/adlibs/.

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