

JANUARY MEN

Bill Anderson
Nick Apollonio
Bruce Boege
Gordon Bok
Tony Bok
Will Brown
David Dodson
Ken Gross
Jamie Huntsberger
Glenn Jenks
Cindy Kallet
Carol Rohl
Forrest Sherman
Bob Stuart

Quasimodal Chorus!

Has been singing pretty steadily since the February Tapes (1984) and at present draws from the list on the right. We have no "leader"; we appoint "directors" as we need them.

Small World Orchestra

A wintry phenomenon, a few years old. Claire van der Ven – flute, Will Brown – laud, Carol Rohl – harp and Gordon Bok – ‘cellamba.

January Men

A small, mostly-men's-chorus which Gordon convened in 1996. A lot, but not all, of their repertoire is unaccompanied traditional songs. There are usually not more than nine singers at any given time. (list at left.)

Recorded, engineered and mastered (from 1995-1998) @ LIMIN MUSIC, Northport, ME by

Bruce Boege

Produced by Gordon Bok, Anne Dodson and Carol Rohl

Mixed by Boege, Bok 'n Rohl™

Cover photos of schooners Isaac H. Evans and Mercantile by Neal Parent, Searsmont, ME

Cover graphic design by Gordon Bok & Tim Seymour

Inside graphic design by Tim Seymour

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P.O. Box 840, Camden, Maine 04843



QUASIMODAL CHORUS!

Bill Anderson
Gordon Bok
Mary Bok
Tony Bok
Mimi Bornstein-Doble
Will Brown
Anne Dodson
Ken Gross
Mary Ann Hensel
Jamie Huntsberger
Cindy Kallet
Carney McRae
Thomas Michaels
John Pincince
Penelope Ray
Carol Rohl
Susan Shaw
Ivan Stancioff
Holly Torsey
Lynn Travis-Stancioff
Marie Weferling
David Weller
Ethelwyn Worden

Gordon Bok

*with Carol Rohl, harp
and a Host of Maine Musicians*



GATHERINGS

LLEGADA ("Arrival")

© Felix Perez Cardozo (a galopa from Paraguay)

Llegada is often played at the beginning of a parade or festival. Carol learned it from the ever-patient Bill Morgan who was teaching the Paraguayan harp class at the Edinburgh Folk Harp Festival in 1989.

Carol – harp; Gordon – 12 string guitar

SWELL ME NET FULL Traditional

Bob Roberts collected this off the East coast of England. It was used for rowing or net-hauling.

Sung here by the January Men and then some; Gordon – nylon 6 string guitar

Out on the ocean, dreary and cold
I live the life of a fisherman bold, so:

Swell me net full, swell me net full

Mackerel for Monday, swell me net full.

Wind from the Southward, wind from the West,
Plenty of fishes will come to your net, so:

- Seatrout for Tuesday -

Wind from the Northward, wind from the East
Many a haul but never a feast.

- We'll fish for Wednesday -

God is our master, the weather He willed
And it's with herring our bellies are filled.

-Herring for Thursday -

Stay in the harbor, look over the foam,
For Friday's the day that the Devil doth own.

- Nothing for Friday -

Stand to your nets with needle and twine
Whether the weather be stormy or fine.

-Sand dabs¹ for Saturday -

When I do die and the life in me fails
Build me a tombstone of herring back-scales.

-Sole is for Sunday-

¹*Any of a number of small bottom-dwelling flatfish.*

MATACHINES Traditional

I learned the matachines played here from recordings my parents had of Southwestern Indians. I quote from a delightful tape from UBIK Sound (PO Box 4771, Albuquerque, NM 87196) called Matachines (1991):

"The Matachines is a traditional dance performed throughout New Mexico on various Saints' Days and Feast Days. There are many active Matachines groups throughout the Hispanic and Indian communities of Northern New Mexico, each one with its own music and unique interpretations of the meaning of the dance."

The "Matachini of Powachiki", on which we end this playing, is from the Tarahumaran Indians.

Small World Orchestra with Tom Judge – 5 string fideola and Susan Groce – fiddle

FIDDLER DANCE THE LIGHT STRATHSPEY/KIRSTEEN Trad/Trad

Carol learned this strathspey from Celtic harper Sue Richard's lovely CD Morning Aire. I can't remember

where I learned Kirsteen, but believe it is a 19th century 'parlor version' of a Gaelic song.

Carol – harp; Gordon – 12 string guitar

Who will walk with thee, Kirsteen
By the shining sea, Kirsteen
O'er the fragrant lea?

Who will be by thy side, Kirsteen
By the high spring-tide, Kirsteen
Walking with his bride?

And when thou grown frail, Kirsteen
Wing to Beinneadh Vale, Kirsteen
Who longs with thee to sail?

WELDON

Trad: Arr. Menhaden Chanteymen of Beaufort

In the Menhaden fisheries of the East coast of America, songs like this were used for hardening up the twine after the fish had been pursed. They were lifting many tons of fish with their backs, so they needed the chanteys.

I shared a fishing-songs workshop in Norfolk with a group of these men (old and younger) and later Bob Zentz sent me a tape of the Menhaden Chanteymen of Beaufort, NC who sang this song. You can tell by the structure of the song that this crew had sung together many years. We made this recording in our early days together, when Bob Stuart was with the group.

Sung by The January Men (Bob Stuart, lead)

I'm going back to Weldon, Weldon, Weldon
Going back to Weldon to get a job in the Weldon Yard.¹

O captain if you fire me
You've got to fire my buddy, too.

Captain's got a luger
And the mate's got an owl's head.²

I don't want no woman
Who's got hair like a horse's mane.

O my house is on fire
And it's almost burning down.

¹*Weldon Yard = the railroad yards in Weldon, NC.*

²*Owl's head = what a double barreled pistol or der-ringer looks like when it's pointed at you.*

THE PARTING GLASS © J.B. Goodenough

Judy would send her "extra" songs to various singers; sometimes because the songs needed a tune, sometimes because they might fit the singer. This one came round through Anne Dodson and Matt Szostak, via Archie Fisher.

Carol – harp; Gordon – 'cellamba

The fire is out, the moon is down
The parting glass is dry and done
And I must go and leave this town
Before the rising of the sun.

Long's the road and many's the mile
Before I rest my soul again
With girls that weep and girls that smile
At all the words and ways of men.

And some there are who may not bide
But wander 'til their journey's end
Or take a girl to be a bride
Or keep a man to be a friend.

When I'm done with wandering
I will sit beside the road and weep
For all the songs I did not sing
And promises I did not keep.

EL PARRANDERO ("The Partygoer")

© Juan Vicente Torrealba (a joropo from Venezuela)

Alfredo Rolando Ortiz, a South American harpist currently living in southern California, has been a great source of music for the folk harp world through his recordings and music transcriptions. Carol learned this from his book, Latin American Harp Music and Techniques.

Carol – harp; Gordon – nylon 6 string guitar

THE GIFT

words: traditional / music: © Gordon Bok

The words were collected and translated from the Gaelic by Alexander Carmichael, and published in his volumes called Carmina Gadelica. Years ago Kate Barnes copied this out and sent it to Jan Harmon, who passed it on to me.

It was sung door to door around Christmas time in the Hebrides. The tune is mine; my cousin Ethelwyn Worden helped me get the kinks out of the harmony, as did Will Brown.

Sung by The Quasimodal Chorus!

I am the gift, I am the poor
I am the man of this night
I am the son of God in the door
I am the gift on the living

Son of the rain, son of the dew
Son of the dawn, son of the clouds;
Son of the planet, son of the star
Son of the element, son of the flame
Son of the moon, son of the sun
Son of Mary of the God-mind

I see the hills, I see the shore,
I see the hosting of angels
A cross on my right shoulder;
I am in the door: open thou.

MORAG / CARMINA GADELICA

music: © Gordon Bok / words: © Kate Barnes

Kate Barnes of Appleton (now Poet Laureate of the State of Maine) was a young mother living in northern Mexico with 3 children when she wrote Carmina Gadelica¹. She had loved the sounds and shapes of Gaelic words as a child. After she came to hear my musical setting of the old Norn legend, The Play of the Lady Odivere, she sent her poem to us, which we later included in the concert-portion of our production of that astonishing tale.

The present setting that Carol and I use for Kate's poem is a tune I made for our lovely friend Morag Henriksen of the Isle of Skye.

Carol – harp; Gordon – cellamba

Carmina Gadelica

Outlands remain: stony lands, moorlands, islands
The cave in the cliff with the wave running over the floor of it,
Mist, and shapes in the mist; tall stones in the Highlands,

Wind like the bellowing bull and the bruling roar of it
But lost is the forest the fleeing princess hurled
Down with her comb: Middle Earth
Becomes Other-world.

Made things are found, of stone, or bone, or gold;
A few old men tell tales of the race-not-human
And of their beasts: the black black bull, the bold,
Shaggy small horse, the kind seal — the doe that is woman.

But the white swan singing before us
On the dark water
Is dying as she sings—
And she a god's daughter.

¹"Gaelic songs"

COMO LLORA UNA ESTRELLA

("How a star cries") Pasaje from Colombia / arr.: Bok & Rohl
Carol learned this from Bill Morgan's recording Patterns of Paraguay.

Carol – harp; Gordon – 12 string guitar

STORMY WEATHER Traditional

Bob Roberts collected this many years ago from men working the spritsail barges of the East coast of England (often called Thames Barges). This is a compilation of three versions which he strung together to make a 'travelog' of a voyage from London to Greater Yarmouth. Published in Roy Palmer's Oxford Book of Sea Songs.

Gordon – 12 string guitar; The January Men

We were laying in Surry Dock* one day
*(at Ruthorhide, London)

And the mate knew it was time to get underway
And it's stormy weather, boys, stormy weather, boys
When the wind blows, the barge will go.
He's homeward bound but he's out of luck
'Cause the skipper's half drunk in The Dog and Duck.* *(a pub)

Well the skipper comes aboard with a girl on his arm
He's going to give up barging and take on a farm
So the mate ran forward and the cook fell in the dock
And the skipper's caught his knackers in the main-sheet block

So the mate's at the wheel but he's gybed her twice
'Cause the skipper's got his knackers in a bowl of ice
At last we're off down the Lime House Reach
When our leeboard knocked on the Greenwich Beach

The barge went ashore and scared our whore
And she says "Chuck this, I'm off ashore!"
We shoved her off and away we did go
But the skipper's got a bottle of beer below
She fills away with a roar and a crack
But there ain't no bargemen up on the deck

There's a crash and a bump and we're ashore
And the mate says "Christ, we're on the Noire"

**(shoal off mouth of Thames)*

Then up comes a mermaid covered in mud
The skipper says I think we're off the Whittaker
Spit* **(sandbank off Essex coast)*

Then up comes another one covered in slime
So we took her down the fo'c'sle and had a good time
On the top of the tide the barge did fleet*

**(old word for sail)*

When the mate sees a ghost on the topsail sheet
So away we go and the ghost did steer
And the cook drank the dregs of the Old Man's beer
We went close-hauled off Orford Ness*

**(East coast headland)*

When the wind backed round to the South-
southwest

We reached our port all safe and sound
And tied her up in Yarmouth Town
So after all our fears and alarms

We all ended up in The Druid's Arms.* **(a pub)*

TO CYRANO © Jan Harmon

As Carol and Jan were going through some of Jan's old music, Carol picked out this one. It had been a music class assignment in 1955 when Jan was about 15.

The harmonies are an alternating mix of Jan's and mine.

Small World Orchestra

My love is like the White Dove tree
Which growing, doth not question why
And doth not root itself in thee,
Nor shade thee from the summer sky.

And if, through love, this gentle heart breaks
In a thousand jagged parts
These shall not fall on thee as mirrors,
Nor swords, nor stars, nor even tears;
But they shall fall as leaves that know
Now is the amber time to go.

BAILANDO SABAKI Oswaldo Gaona, Paraguay

Another favorite from Patterns of Paraguay.

Carol – harp; Gordon – 12 string guitar

SOUTHERN CROSS © Jim Stewart, SOCAN

From the pen of my favorite New Brunswick poet, Jim Stewart, who composed the epic Marco Polo Suite, "a tribute to one of Canada's most famous ships". I quote from the notes of his CD: "On its first voyage to Australia (1852) the Marco Polo lost 52 children to a measles epidemic." The "light" is Cape Otway off Melbourne, the "birds" are Australian swans.

Carol was the harper on the original recording of the suite.

Carol – harp; Gordon – viol

There's a light in the distant darkness tonight
Soon we'll be there, tomorrow I swear
May the fire in your heart and eyes be as bright
This is my silent prayer.

So rest, baby, rest — by the shining be blest
Never in shadows lost
This lone holy candle is guiding us on
Under the Southern Cross.

There were birds in the twilight, reeling on high
Like Noah's sign, their freedom was mine
And although they were wandering in a strange sky
Theirs was the far shoreline.

So hush, baby, hush — by the wing sounding rush
Never in sunset lost
These cloud-dwelling dreamers are guiding us on
Under the Southern Cross.

And this ship has seen glory, heartache and mirth
Sunlight and hail, in doldrums and gale
Though she's ten thousand miles from the land of
her birth
On through this night we sail.

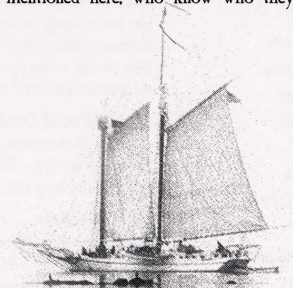
So sleep, baby, sleep — by the wind and the deep
Never again be tossed
This proud weary traveler's taking us home
Under the Southern Cross.

GORDON'S FAREWELL © 1996 Gordon Bok

This is my farewell to a house I sold which had been in my family for four generations. At a 'musical' there one night I walked around outside watching friends making music through the windows and thought: "There's enough music in those timbers by now to sing to future occupants for another hundred years." Bruce Boege thinks he hears a bit of How High the Moon in the "A"-part. (So do I.)

Small World Orchestra

Here's to those who, gathering into the music
From the many strands of their lives, make
this place more than a place. And to all the others
not mentioned here, who know who they are.



*Celtic Harp built by Triplett, San Luis Obispo, CA
Cellamba & Fiddles built by Peter White, Albuquerque NM
Viol, 12 string Guitar, & Laud built by Nick Apollonio,
Rockport, ME
Nylon string Guitar (El Parrandero) was Jan Harmon's old
Aria
Nylon string Guitar (Swell Me Net Full) was Gordon's aunt
Ethelwyn's "Mango", rebuilt by Nick Apollonio*

Gordon Bok

GATHERINGS

1. Llegada 2:56
 2. Swell Me Net Full 3:07
 3. Matachines 3:04
 4. Fiddler Dance the Light
Strathspey/Kirsteen 3:23
 5. Weldon 2:39
 6. The Parting Glass 3:31
 7. El Parrandero 2:51
 8. The Gift 1:51
 9. Morag/Carmina Gadelica 3:10
 10. Como Llora una Estrella 3:44
 11. Stormy Weather 3:30
 12. To Cyrano 3:26
 13. Bailando Sabaki 2:27
 14. Southern Cross 4:27
 15. Gordon's Farewell 3:34
- total time: 47:40



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THD CD009



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GORDON BOK with Carol Rohl
The Quasimodal Chorus! • January Men
Small World Orchestra

*A celebration of those local musicians who have nourished me
and the music I love.*

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Printed in Canada

