

The American Folklife Center of the Library of Congress presents

HOMEGROWN
2012
The Music of America

Traditional Ethnic and Regional Music and Dance that's "Homegrown" in Communities across the U.S.

AN ACQUISITIONS & PRESENTATION PROJECT

Ruže Dalmatinke



Traditional Croatian song from Washington State

- LJUBICA "BINKI" FRANULović, Lead Vocals • ALMA FRANULović PLANCICH, Harmony Vocals
- PASKO KESOVIIA, Accordion • MATTHEW OLICH TWETEN, Prim • STEVEN MATAYA, Brač
- ALLAN SWENSSON, Guitar & Bugarija • MATTHEW THOMPSON, Bass

Wednesday, July 18, 2012

12 NOON - 1 PM

Coolidge Auditorium

Ground Floor, Thomas Jefferson Building

Library of Congress

10 First Street, SE,

Washington, DC

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TO THE PUBLIC**

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Ruže Dalmatinke and Vela Luka Croatian Dance Ensemble

When members of Vela Luka were visiting their native Croatia, they heard a familiar traditional song lilting through the doors of a nearby church. But it was a different version of the song than the one they knew, with fewer verses and a shorter chorus. They visited the church and sang their more complete version, to the delight of the local choir of nuns. Much of this song had been lost as a result of over sixty years of war and social displacement in the village. Far away in Anacortes, Washington, a family had been keeping alive the region's local songs, music, dance, and myriad other expressions of Croatian folklore for over sixty years, and were now bringing them back home.

Marija Damjanovic Franulovich and her family came to the United States as refugees after World War II. A native of the Dalmatian coast in Croatia, Marija brought an immense repertoire of songs, stories, and history to the United States. She learned traditional Croatian songs and stories through oral tradition in her home village. In Croatian refugee camps in Italy, South America, and Haiti, she taught her children her songs, stories, dances, needlecraft, and foodways. The family joined her mother-in-law in Anacortes in 1949, where Marija and her late husband, Jure (George), immediately recognized the importance of maintaining their traditions in this new land. Their home became a center of Croatian culture for the entire Puget Sound region. Her daughters, Maria, Alma and Ljubica (Binki) later organized Washington's acclaimed Vela Luka Croatian Dance Ensemble and the Ruže Dalmatinke Orchestra.

Marija Damjanovic Franulovich, the Croatian tradition bearer, passed away in 2011, but her legacy continues through her children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren, who sing and dance with Vela Luka or Ruže Dalmatinke.

Vela Luka was founded in 1975 to perform music and dance. The core of their repertoire comes from the Dalmatian coast, an area particularly well known for beautiful harmony singing. Croatian immigrants from this region were attracted to the Anacortes area because its climate and topography closely resemble those of their native fishing villages. One-quarter of the residents of Anacortes and Fidalgo Island, Washington are descended from immigrants from another fishing village: Vela Luka, on the Island of Korčula, Croatia. One of Marija's daughters, Maria Petrish, is the Executive Director of Vela Luka Croatian Dance Ensemble.

Ruže Dalmatinke was formed to help preserve and

perform music and song. They accompany Vela Luka in performance, but often perform separately at festivals and community events throughout the Northwest. The group was founded by Marija's two other daughters, Binki Franulović Spahi and Alma Franulović Plancich. They have recruited some of the Northwest's best musicians in their nearly forty years of existence. Both Vela Luka and Ruže Dalmatinke have expanded their repertoires to include music and dance from most regions of Croatia and some other Balkan countries.

When asked what keeps these traditions so alive and well within Washington's immigrant community, Alma Plancich said: "Family and our love for our culture's preservation."

The group's love of and dedication to preserving this music is evident in their spirited performances. Their voices and musicianship have captured the wide range of regional styles, from those of the pastoral inlands to those of the seafaring islands. Some types of Croatian traditional music that they have mastered include: Open-throat singing, a tradition of the inland regions and mountainous areas of Croatia, which consists of a solo voice singing each line of lyrics with other voices answering in call-and-response style; *Klapa*, a form of harmony singing particularly popular in Dalmatia, which can be a cappella or accompanied by a stringed instrument, which traces its roots to liturgical church singing, and which celebrates love, food, wine, the sea, and the homeland; and *tamburica*, a form of music played on stringed instruments of the same name, which developed in the nineteenth century and celebrates rural life.

Willie Smyth

Folk and Community Arts Coordinator
Washington State Arts Commission

The American Folklife Center was created by Congress in 1976 and placed at the Library of Congress to "preserve and present American folklife" through programs of research, documentation, archival preservation, reference service, live performance, exhibition, public programs, and training. The Center includes the American Folklife Center Archive of folk culture, which was established in 1928 and is now one of the largest collections of ethnographic material from the United States and around the world. Please visit our web site <http://www.loc.gov/folklife/>.

