



# The Accordion Players' Perspective

DR. WILLIAM  
SCHIMMEL

EBOOK C2016 WS

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# About the book

Essays about accordion culture in everyday life - from the ordinary to the proper - from the regular to the remarkable. Designed for all accordionists who embark on a career - or who are already there and haven't realized it yet.

# Copyright

Author

Dr. William Schimmel

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# THE ACCORDION PLAYERS' PERSPECTIVE

ultra violet came to me one day  
and said  
Bill, we go see dali today  
i escorted her to the guggenheim museum  
salvador dali was having a private exhibition  
of a new painting  
you had to look through a plexagraph lens  
to see it - one person at a time  
she tapped him on the shoulder - dali!  
her turned around and said - isabelle!  
her kissed her and she brought me to him  
he shook my hand, stared at me at length  
and said: impression!!!  
i said  
i love your work  
dali said "j'amie!"  
"dali in love with dali!"  
we then went to jim mc mullen's  
for hamburgers and asparagus  
which was the mandatory food  
after seeing dali  
ultra invited me to another dali event  
once a month he gave a dinner party

at trader vic's at the plaza hotel  
i went there and said  
mr dali's table?!  
they said yes  
go right in  
i went in  
i saw mr dali at the head of the table  
it looked like the last supper  
he was eating chicken soup  
minions all around  
transvestites etc.  
i saw ultra sitting there  
i got her eye  
meet you outside i said (by way of a nod)  
i waited outside  
when the dinner was over  
a big procession started  
with dali at the head  
leaving the plaza  
a stretch limo waiting for dali  
paparazzi were there  
shooting pictures  
i realized that  
i was enjoying the show  
and was happy  
that i was not part of it  
ultra saw me  
and got out of line

and we boarded a subway  
and went to soho  
to John Valcarro's loft  
a party  
i became an accordion player in the true sense  
that night  
yes  
i realized  
the accordion players' perspective  
that night  
yes, je suis le accordéoniste  
i need not elaborate further  
you know what i mean

# DR. SCHIMMEL'S ACCORDION NEWSLETTER #540

BEAUTIFUL FALL DAY  
TIME TO REFLECT  
WHAT BETTER WAY  
TO REFLECT  
THAN  
WITH ONE'S  
ACCORDION  
SIMPLY GUIDE YOU HANDS  
OVER THE KEYS AND BUTTONS  
AND LET THE MELODIES AND HARMONIES  
APPEAR  
AND DISAPPEAR  
LET THE ACCORDION  
MAKE THE MUSIC  
AND YOU BE THE COURIER  
DON'T WORRY HOW IT SOUNDS  
AT THE BEGINNING  
LET IT TAKE IT'S OWN COURSE  
AND THAT  
MY DEAR FRIENDS  
IS THE FIRST STEP TOWARDS IMPROVISATION  
ENJOY



# DR. SCHIMMEL'S ACCORDION NEWSLETTER #541

I WORKED SUMMERS FOR MY FATHER  
HE WAS A CUSTODIAN  
IN A PUBLIC SCHOOL  
IN WINCOTE PA  
AN UPSCALE AREA  
ALTHOUGH IT WAS A PUBLIC SCHOOL  
REGULAR PEOPLE WENT THERE  
AS WELL AS NOT SO REGULAR  
IT WAS A MIXED RACE SCHOOL  
EVEN BACK IN 1960  
REGGIE JACKSON WENT THERE  
I PLAYED ASSEMBLIES THERE  
AS WELL AS DANCES  
I WAS A STAR THERE - SOMETIMES  
BLACK GUYS WOULD SLOW DANCE  
WITH WHITE CHICKS  
AND WHITE GUYS WOULD SLOW DANCE  
WITH BLACK CHICKS  
BUMPING AND GRINDING  
DRY HUMPING  
UNHEARD OF IN MOST PLACES  
ESPECIALLY PHILADELPHIA  
UNHEARD OF ON AMERICAN BANDSTAND

EVEN JERRY BLAVAT - NEVER SAW IT THERE EITHER  
HE WAS THE GEATER WITH THE HEATER  
THE BOSS WITH THE HOT SAUCE  
HIPPER THAN DICK CLARK  
BACK TO MY FATHER  
HE WAS THE BOSS OF THE JANITORS  
HE HAD HUGE SET OF KEYS  
THAT OPENED EVERY DOOR  
I STARTED TO NOTICE DOORS  
THAT MOST PEOPLE IGNORED  
EVENTUALLY I STARTED OPENING  
SOME OF THE DOORS  
I WOULD BORROW HIS KEYS  
WHEN HE WENT ON A LUNCH BREAK  
SOME OF THE DOORS OPENED INTO ROOMS  
THAT WERE SIMPLY STORAGE ROOMS  
EQUIPMENT, PAPER, VACUUM CLEANERS, POLISH ETC.  
ONE DAY I OPENED A DOOR  
THAT LED TO A PATH OUTSIDE  
THAT LED TO A JAPANESE GARDEN  
I HAD A NICE TIME THAT DAY  
IN THE GARDEN  
LISTENING TO MY TRANSISTOR RADIO  
I DIDN'T WORK THAT DAY  
BUT MY FATHER SEEMED TO GET IT  
HE UNDERSTOOD THAT I HAD TO LEARN  
TO OPEN DOORS  
ANY SUCCESS I ACHIEVED I OWE TO MY FATHER

WHEN I CAME TO NEW YORK FROM PHILADELPHIA  
I MARVELED AT THE TALENT AHEAD OF ME  
OF THOSE I FELT FAR MORE QUALIFIED  
SOMEHOW MANY OF THEM DIDN'T SEE  
THE DOORS I SAW  
OR IF THEY DID  
THEY PASSED THEM BY  
I MADE IT A POINT TO  
OPEN EVERY DOOR  
THAT I NOTICED  
AND I'M HERE TODAY  
LOOKING FOR NEW DOORS  
LOOK FOR THE DOORS NEAREST TO YOU  
THEY'RE THERE  
YOU HAVEN'T NOTICED THEM YET  
BUT THEY'RE THERE  
AND THEY ARE WAITING FOR YOU  
TO OPEN THEM  
GO AHEAD AND DO IT

# DR. SCHIMMEL'S ACCORDION NEWSLETTER #549

i prefer an accordion  
i can take anywhere  
a blank canvas  
a machine that can  
play anything  
yes, yes  
i have the other ones too  
the little funky ones  
etc, etc  
but one has to ask  
what do i really need?  
do i need 6 or 7 accordions?  
or  
one or two that really do the job!  
[www.billschimmel.com](http://www.billschimmel.com)  
put the Seminars on your calendar  
and tell us what you need!!  
August 7, 8, 9 at Tenri  
CHOCK FULL O'LEARNIN'  
check Dr. Schimmel's CALENDAR  
for upcoming performances - on  
[billschimmel.com](http://billschimmel.com) or his Facebook  
page as well as Twitter

# DR. SCHIMMEL'S ACCORDION NEWSLETTER #550

WHO KNEW?

TEN YEARS AGO MUSIC ROW WAS THRIVING

WEST 48TH ST

MANNY'S

SAM ASH

WE BUY GUITARS

PAWN SHOPS

IT WAS THE PLACE TO GO

IF YOU NEEDED A

MUSICAL INSTRUMENT

SHEET MUSIC

COLONY MUSIC WAS JUST A SHORT WALK AWAY

IT WAS A LEGEND TEN YEARS AGO

IT IS A LEGEND TODAY

FOR A DIFFERENT REASON

ALL OF THE PLACES ARE GONE

EXCEPT TWO PLACES

RUDY'S - FOR GUITARS

AND

ALEX - FOR ACCORDIONS

AND

IT'S THE ALEX ACCORDION SIGN

THAT STANDS OUT ON THE BLOCK

AS IF IT WERE THE ONLY MUSIC STORE  
ON THE BLOCK  
LET ME BACKTRACK A BIT  
A FEW YEARS AGO  
I WAS VISITING MY NOW DECEASED MOM  
IN A PHILADELPHIA NURSING HOME  
TO GET BACK TO NEW YORK  
I HAD TO GO TO A LOCAL TRAIN  
THAT TOOK ME TO 30TH ST STATION  
WHICH THEN TOOK ME TO NY  
ON MY WAY TO THE LOCAL TRAIN  
AND IT WAS DARK  
SUBURBAN DARK  
I PASS A MUSIC STORE  
THAT I'VE PASSED MANY TIMES  
THIS TIME IT HAD A SIGN UP THAT SAID:  
ACCORDION LESSONS  
AND IT HAD A VINTAGE  
WURLITZER ACCORDION  
IN THE WINDOW  
STANDING BY THE WINDOW WERE:  
A MOTHER, A CHILD ABOUT 10  
AND THE FATHER  
THE CHILD WAS POINTED TO THE ACCORDION  
" I WANT ONE OF THOSE - AND I WANT LESSONS "  
OVER AND OVER  
I WAS PASSING THEM ON THE DARK STREET  
AND THEY WERE AWARE OF IT - WHO WOULDN'T BE?

I WANTED TO GO OVER TO THEM AND SAY  
HI, I'M DR. SCHIMMEL, YOU KNOW, THE ACCORDION  
PLAYER  
AND OF COURSE  
THEY WOULD HAVE:  
RAN  
TRIED TO IGNORE ME  
CALLED THE COPS  
SPRAYED ME WITH MACE  
OR.....  
YOU GET THE DRIFT  
I WAS THE WITNESS  
THE OBSERVER  
THE OUTSIDER  
THE MAN IN BLACK PASSING THEM ON THE STREET  
AND NOW  
BACK TO ALEX ON 48TH STREET  
I NEEDED SOME WORK DONE  
SO I TOOK IT TO ALEX  
HI, I'M DR. WILLIAM SCHIMMEL  
ALEX SAID:  
OK, SHOW ME YOUR ACCORDION  
OK, PICK IT UP ON FRIDAY  
IT WAS TUESDAY  
THE STORE LOOKED BUSY  
OTHER WORKERS WORKING AWAY  
FIXING AND REFURBISHING ACCORDIONS  
HE GAVE ME A CLAIM TICKET

I PICKED IT UP ON FRIDAY  
FIXED  
HE THEN GAVE ME A BALL POINT PEN  
WITH A FLASHLIGHT  
USE IT WHEN IT GETS DARK, HE SAID  
AND I THOUGHT OF THE  
DARK PHILADELPHIA STREET  
WHEN I LEFT  
HE SAID  
GOD BLESS YOU  
I THEN  
(DRESSED IN BLACK)  
WENT AROUND THE CORNER  
TO WEST 47TH ST  
TO PLAY IN  
AN AMERICAN IN PARIS  
WHERE  
THE ACCORDION BOOK  
IS THE THICKEST  
AND MOST PROMINENT  
(and most difficult)  
IN THE ENTIRE ORCHESTRA  
IT WAS MY JOB  
TO PLAY IT  
AND MAKE IT  
PLAYABLE  
FOR OTHERS  
WHAT'S THE LESSON HERE?



NO LESSON  
EXCEPT ACCORDION LESSONS  
THAT LITTLE KID IN PHILADELPHIA WANTED TO  
PLAY THE ACCORDION  
HE WANTED LESSONS  
I WANTED LESSONS AT 10  
AND I GOT THEM  
I WANTED TO BE ONE OF THOSE  
RATHER SPECIAL PEOPLE  
THAT YOU HEARD  
ON THE RADIO  
ON RECORD  
IN THE MOVIES  
IN SHOWS  
ON TV  
AND PERHAPS  
YOU DIDN'T KNOW  
WHO THEY WERE  
YET THEY WERE WORKING  
EVEN WHEN THE ACCORDION  
STOPPED BEING POPULAR  
I SUPPOSE I GOT MY WISH  
I ALSO MADE IT A POINT  
TO FIND OUT WHO THESE  
ANONYMOUS ACCORDION PLAYERS WERE  
AND I DID  
THEY BECAME MY IDOLS  
UNTIL

IT BECAME MY TURN  
AND  
I DON'T KNOW IF THAT PHILADELPHIA KID  
GOT LESSONS OR NOT  
BUT WHEN I PASSED HIM ON THAT DARK STREET  
I THOUGHT I WAS WATCHING MYSELF  
MAYBE, MAYBE IT WILL BE HIS TURN SOMEDAY  
MAYBE HE WILL GO OUT OF HIS WAY TO FIND OUT  
WHO THAT MAN IN BLACK WAS  
AND OTHERS OF COURSE  
AND MAYBE HE WILL TAKE HIS ACCORDION  
FOR REPAIRS TO SOMEONE ON WEST WHATEVER  
STREET  
AND AS HE LEAVES THE SHOP  
HE WILL HEAR THE OWNER  
SENDING HIS BEST WISHES:  
GOD BLESS YOU!

# DR SCHIMMEL'S ACCORDION NEWSLETTER #542

SEE AND HEAR DR. SCHIMMEL THIS WEEK AT:

ISSUE PROJECT ROOM IN BROOKLYN

OCTOBER 16, 17 8PM

PORT BOU - AN OPERA BY ELLIOTT SHARP

AND

MARK ON YOUR CALENDAR

THE 2015 SEMINARS

CHOCK FULL 'O LEARNIN'

AT TENRI

AUGUST 7, 8, 9

OUR 21ST SMASH YEAR

# DR. SCHIMMEL'S ACCORDION NEWSLETTER #543

GIGGING IS ART!

# DR. SCHIMMEL'S ACCORDION NEWSLETTER #551

YES

IT'S SEMINAR TIME AGAIN

IT'S WHEN WE ALL MEET

TO TALK AND PLAY

AND PLAY AND TALK

ABOUT

THE ACCORDION,

ACCORDIONS

AND ALL THINGS

RELATED TO IT

AND

UNRELATED TO IT

IT'S OUR 21ST YEAR

AND WE'RE AS EXCITED ABOUT IT

AS IF IT WERE OUR FIRST BACK IN 1995

WHAT GOES ON AT THE SEMINARS?

YOU WON'T FIND THEM ON YOU TUBE

ALTHOUGH THERE ARE A NUMBER OF

PERFORMANCES AND VIDEO ART WORKS

THAT HAD THEIR ORIGINS AT THE SEMINARS

YOU CAN ALSO LISTEN

ON WS RADIO

TO 3 MASTER CLASSES

AND 3 CONCERTS  
AND THAT'S ABOUT IT  
WE LIKE TO KEEP IT THAT WAY  
A UNIQUE EXPERIENCE  
AND  
AS IN ALL UNIQUE EXPERIENCES  
YOU HAVE TO SHOW UP  
AND TAKE PART IN IT  
IN SOME FORM OR ANOTHER  
ACTIVELY OR PASSIVELY  
SHOWING UP REQUIRES WORK  
YOU HAVE TO GET YOURSELF  
THERE  
NOT ALWAYS EASY  
MY FORMER COMPOSITION MENTOR  
ROGER SESSIONS - A GREAT AMERICAN COMPOSER  
TOLD ME THAT HE STOPPED ATTENDING CONCERTS:  
"YOU HAVE TO WASH YOUR FACE  
BRUSH YOUR TEETH  
COMB YOUR HAIR  
BOARD A BUS  
GET OFF AT A  
LARGE BOX  
GO INTO THAT LARGE BOX  
UP TO A CAGE  
PAY A LOT OF MONEY FOR A PIECE OF PASTEBOARD  
AND A FEW STEPS AWAY  
A FUNNY LOOKING MAN

TAKES YOUR PASTEBOARD AWAY  
AND TEARS IN IN HALF  
YOU SIT DOWN IN AN UNCOMFORTABLE SEAT  
NEXT TO SOMEONE YOU PROBABLY WOULDN'T LIKE  
AND THE LIGHTS DIM  
A FUNNY LOOKING MAN COMES OUT AND BOWS  
WE CLAP OUR HANDS  
AND HE SITS DOWN TO A LARGE HUNK OF WOOD  
AND MAKES A LOT OF NOISE  
AND THEN GETS UP AND BOWS  
AND WE CLAP AGAIN  
AND THEN  
WE GET UP  
AND GO HOME"  
PRETTY SAD STATE, MR SESSIONS, PRETTY SAD  
AND SARDONICALLY QUITE FUNNY  
WHY?  
BECAUSE THERE IS A CERTAIN TRUTH TO IT  
WHICH IS WHY PEOPLE WANT TO HEAR BACH IN BARS  
AND I CAN'T BLAME THEM  
WE HOLD OUR MASTER CLASSES AT 3 PM  
AND OUR CONCERTS AT 7  
PLENTY OT TIME TO GO BACH BAR HOPPING AFTERWARDS  
AND YOU WILL PROBABLY NEED TO DO A LITTLE BAR HOPPING  
AFTERWARDS  
TO SIT AND THINK ABOUT - (EITHER ALONE OR WITH A FRIEND OR  
FRIENDS)  
WHAT WENT DOWN AT THE MASTER CLASS AND THEN THE CONCERTS  
(THERE'S A DINNER BREAK BETWEEN THEM AS WELL).

TENRI IS A BEAUTIFUL GALLERY SPACE  
WHITE AND OPEN  
SERIOUS, YET RELAXED  
AND WONDERFULLY AIR CONDITIONED  
DRESS CASUALLY, BUT DON'T DRESS DOWN  
IT'S A CLASSY PLACE  
AND IT'S A WORLD CLASS EVENT  
GET YOURSELF THERE THIS YEAR  
AND BRING A FRIEND OR TWO  
TO THE SEMINARS  
AUGUST 7, 8 AND 9 AT TENRI  
43A WEST 13 ST  
CHOCK FULL O'LEARNIN'  
SEE YOU THERE?  
I'LL BE LOOKING FOR YOU



# DR. SCHIMMEL'S ACCORDION NEWSLETTER #560

here is my take:

stalin - socialism

mussolini - fascism/nationalism

hitler - national socialism

bernie/hillary - socialism

gop - nationalism

trump - national socialism

a bit simple - but.....

History repeats itself

not always the same way

but the patterns always return

and the pendulum always swings

the accordion is history in a box

it can help change the course

it can provide warning

it can sooth

it can provoke

it can challenge

it can

it

it.....

no better time to play it

anytime

anywhere

do it

and

return home

to the SEMINARS

JULY 29, 30 AND 31 AT TENRI

OUR 22ND SMASH YEAR

NO PLACE LIKE HOME

# WORKING YOUR WAY DOWN

WORKING YOUR WAY DOWN  
AS YOU GAIN PROMINENCE  
YOU MAY BECOME  
THE  
SCUM OF THE EARTH  
THE MORE YOU WORK  
THE MORE YOU WILL KNOW  
I MEAN  
KNOW EVERYONE'S BAGGAGE  
LIKE THE FIRST MAN OF THE VILLAGE  
IN EASTERN EUROPE  
HE WAS AT YOUR BAPTISM  
YOUR CONFIRMATION OR BAR MITZPHA  
YOUR WEDDING  
YOUR FUNERAL  
YOUR EXECUTION  
THIS PERSON HAS YOUR NUMBER  
AND IS GREATLY RESPECTED  
BUT  
NOT "LOVED"  
IT  
MAY BE THE KEY TO A KIND OF INDISPENSIBILITY  
THAT KIND OF PERSON ENDS UP GETTING THE CALL  
AND THE

PEOPLE WHO HIRE YOU MAY NOT TREAT YOU WELL BECAUSE  
THEY DON'T WANT YOU TO RAISE YOUR PRICE  
THEY WANT YOU - AND DON'T WANT ANYONE ELSE TO HAVE YOU  
THEY DON'T WANT TO BARGAIN WITH YOU  
THIS ATTITUDE IS A KIND OF IRONIC RESPECT AND HONOR  
ITS GOOD TO KNOW THIS  
AND  
YOU HAVE TO WORK WITH IT  
YOU HAVE TO KNOW WHEN NOT TO RAISE YUR PRICE  
AND  
WHEN YOU SHOULD  
HOW NOT TO PRICE YOURSELF OUT OF BUSINESS  
YET STAY COMPETITIVE  
ITS A GOOD PROBLEM  
AND THE SOLUTIONS  
ARE  
ONGOING  
ALWAYS IN PROCESS  
THERE'S NO ONE ANSWER  
ONE SOLUTION  
INTUITION IS IMPORTANT  
INSTINCT IS NECESSARY  
AND MOST OF ALL  
AN EVEN HEAD  
A WELL ADJUSTED PSYCHE  
AND THE KNOWLEDGE THAT  
THINGS MAY NOT BE  
THE WAY THEY LOOK

OR EVEN FEEL  
ONE MUST FEEL  
CONFORTABLE  
WITH THE DISCOMFORT

# PROVOLONE

I WAS PLAYING THE MAVERICK FESTIVAL IN WOODSTOCK, NY  
WE STAYED AT A RESIDENCE IN THE HEART OF THE TOWN  
THE LADY WHO OWNED IT NEEDED TO GO SHOPPING  
TO MAKE US OUR MEALS - PART OF THE DEAL  
SHE ASKED ME  
WHAT KIND OF CHEESE DO YOU WANT?  
I ANSWERED: PROVOLONE!  
SHE CAME BACK FROM SHOPPING AND SAID:  
I COULDN'T FIND ANY PROVOLONE IN WOODSTOCK  
AND I REALIZED  
THAT PROVALONE  
WAS THE CHEESE OF THE WORKING MAN  
WORKING MAN'S CHEESE  
WOODSTOCK ONLY HAD  
HIPPIE CHEESE IN ITS FOOD STORES  
BRIE  
GOUDA  
GOAT  
HAVARTI  
BLEU  
ETC ETC ETC  
HIPPIE CHEESE  
PROVOLONE  
IS WHAT WE PUT IN OUR

HOAGIES

HEROS

GRINDERS

SUBS

PROVOLONE IS ROUND

LIKE A COMMUNION

SO WE CAN OFFER IT UP

TO ALL OF OUR FELLOW WORKERS

AND TO THOSE WE SERVE

PROVOLONE IS A SACRAMENT

A EUCHARIST

AND AS ACCORDIONISTS

WE CAN CONSECRATED IT

WHEN WE ATTEND ACCORDION-MASS

IN THE NAME OF SAN DIERO, SAN FROSINI

AND SAN ETTORE

MOST OF ALL

EAT PROVOLONE

EVERY DAY

IT'S THE WORKING MAN'S (AND OF COURSE THE WORKING WOMAN'S)

CHEESE

# DR. SCHIMMEL'S ACCORDION NEWSLETTER #551

BACK FROM BERLIN

BACK FROM ZORBA

BACK IN AMERICAN IN PARIS

GERMANY - REAL

ZORBA - VIRTUAL

AMERICAN IN PARIS - VIRTUAL

I REALLY WAS IN BERLIN

EAST BERLIN

DOING ELLIOTT SHARP'S PORT BOU

AT THE KONZERTHAUS

I REALLY WASN'T IN GREECE

WHEN I PLAYED ZORBA

ON BROADWAY IN THE 80'S

AND AT CITY CENTER

TWO WEEKS AGO

OR WAS I?

I'M REALLY NOT IN PARIS

AS I PLAY IN

AN AMERICAN IN PARIS

OR AM I?

I ALSO RECENTLY PLAYED MY OWN WORK

PAROUSIA

I WROTE IN IN 1971



IN THE PAST  
I PLAYED IT AGAIN IN 2015  
PRESENT  
AND I HOPE IT WILL RESONATE  
FOR THE FUTURE  
PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE  
EXISTING ALL AT ONCE  
VIRTUAL AND ACTUAL REALITY  
WHICH IS REALLY REAL?  
DOES IT MATTER?  
NOT WHEN WE HAVE ACCORDIONS  
AS OUR METHOD OF TRANSPORTATION  
RIGHT NOW I'M IN BERMUDA  
IN MY MIND OF COURSE  
NICE PLACE