

BELLS & MOTLEY OLDEN MUSIC

John Bromka
Sondra Bromka

www.bellsandmotley.com



Historic & Folkloric
MUSICIANS
STORYTELLERS
INSTRUMENT MAKERS



BELLS & MOTLEY

Sondra Bromka-John Bromka

Musicians Storytellers

Artists-in-Education

Medieval • Renaissance • Celtic

*Early American Heritage Traditions
Instruments, Dances, Tales, Celebrations*

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HISTORIC STRINGS, WINDS, MORE!



ARS LONGA
VITA BREVIS EST

Harp
Lute

Hammer Dulcimer

Hurdy Gurdy

Recorders & Whistles

Assorted Reeds

Fiddles & Viols

Nyckelharpa

Cittern

Pipe & Tabor

Ttun ttun

Tromba Marina

Asst'd Bagpipes

Our Renaissance Faire “Instrumentarium” -

where we present Concerts, Musical Theater Performances, teach historic dances

BELLS & MOTLEY ARE MAKING MUSICAL HISTORY

MUSICAL STORYTELLING ~ AROUND THE WORLD, ACROSS TIME

- **“15 Miles on the Erie Canal”** Sing-along Folk Operetta –heritage instruments, music, tall tales! **“Music Along the Canal” intro** & other options available
- **“The Boy Who Went to Visit the North Wind”** Traditional Tale of a heroic boy *plus*”Who Has Heard the Wind” wind instruments of long ago ~**DOUBLE TREASURE!**
- **“Stone Soup & the Hurdy Gurdy Man”** story & concert ~**DOUBLE TREASURE!**
- **“The Ant & the Grasshopper”** Aesop’s Fabled Tale of Dreaming & Doing
- **“Bawshou and the Dragon”** Chinese Pageant Authentic instruments, many options for participation - Dragon Mask-Making, Dragon Dancing, more

WITH CONCERTS FOR ALL AGES ~ MANY SPECIAL THEMES, HOLIDAYS & SEASONS

- “Music & Instruments of Long Ago & Far Away”
- “Music, World Instruments, and the Science of Sound” unique instrument inventions
- “Sculpted Sound: From Wood to Art to Music” Concert/Historic Art Images

MULTIDISCIPLINARY PROJECTS ~

- Renaissance & Medieval Arts: Music, Dance, Theater, Art
- Colonial Conviviality Early American music, dance, cultural celebrations
- Learn Historic Dances choose NYS Heritage, Renaissance, Victorian, more...
- Historic Book Arts: Illumination, Binding, Styling, and more
- Musical Instrument making

Concert: “From Art to Wood to Music: Sculpted Sound”



One of our most popular programs for Summer 2018:
**“MUSIC, WORLD INSTRUMENTS,
and the SCIENCE OF SOUND”**



Other Supporting Skills and Interests: Using natural materials for the creation of art & music



Making reeds for rare instruments,
Making quill pens from turkey feathers,
from scratch. A skill Sondra picked up as
a child growing up next to a turkey farm....



Talk about STEAM!

Backyard projects::
hides for parchment,
for illuminations
as well as drum heads

Our donkey head, made
from willow wicker by
Sondra decades ago, has
found its way into at
least 4 original plays and
many bagpipe parades
Sondra's university
degree is in Art. Ed



BACK TO NATURE

By Jim Reilly
Staff Writer

If a "Tall Trees" trip out to Highland Forest is part of your fall tradition, you've got one last chance to keep the routine going this year.

The county park hosts the last of three "Tall Trees Weekends" from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday. The star of the show will be Highland Forest's sawmill, which will be whirring and whining all day. There's more in

Making Music Accessible



**Frequently heard from adults:
“I always wanted to play the ...”**



Children are rarely shy!



One of our many Participatory Musical Storytelling shows

“THE ANT & THE GRASSHOPPER”

Aesop’s famous tale of Dreaming & Doing



“Grasshopper John” leads with his
giant Tromba Marina,
which he built for this show!



Sondra is “Queen Isabelle”
of the Ants, famous for
working hard!



our “Butterfly Dancers”



Percussion & Fiddlers



The Tromba Marina – played by “Jumping Jupiter Grasshopper” (also our Chinese Dragon in our “Bawshou & The Dragon” Musical Storytelling)







A hungry traveler arrives...what do you do if you have no food to share?

“STONE SOUP” Sing-along Storytelling

Can be teamed with
“Hurdy Gurdy Concert” for Double Treasure



But he brings a magic stone, a magic pepper grinder, and a great song to sing with us!



“WASSAIL!” - Christmas Concerts, and Storytelling Pageants

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Audience members are always delighted to find they have roles in our improvisatory musical Christmas pageant.

Whether our Wisemen and Donkey be children or adults, their off-the-cuff performances are always memorable and hilarious!



“MUSIC ALONG THE CANAL” Multicultural Heritage Concert

NYS TRADITIONAL MUSIC, INSTRUMENTS, DANCES

*offered as an Interactive Stand-alone,
or as an introduction to our Erie Canal play*



Above:
How do you play IRISH BODHRAN?
Sondra is showing children how to use pencils as “tippers” and notebooks as drums to learn the secrets of playing;
As John plays traditional Irish-style bagpipes



Right:
**HAMMERED DULCIMER &
HURDY GURDY- how do they work?**



“15 MILES ON THE ERIE CANAL” - our participatory Folk Operetta features an entirely different set of 19th c. NYS Instruments! Music, dance workshops & tall tale writing options



We modeled our original staged operetta after entertainments one might have enjoyed at the local opera houses of the mid-19th c. canal era. A weaving of Tall Tales, sing-alongs, and cameo roles for the audience to fully engage, the show features favorite traditional American instruments in our collection: fiddle, banjo, hammered dulcimer, squeezeboxes, boat horn, hurdy gurdy...

“15 MILES ON THE ERIE CANAL”

Our Historic Folk Operetta Performance

- Each & every audience makes it different!



A highly participatory performance program, there are plenty of opportunities for audience singing, movement, and action.

A choice cameo role: being selected to play the part of our trusty mule and hero, Sal



Children wrote & performed four original Tall Tales
as part of the finale production





Another unique expanded production:

Children become an even larger part
of the our Erie Canal performance

A Boy's Choir!

A Pennywhistle Orchestra!



“Bawshou & The Dragon” Pageant, community performance at Aurora Opera House



*Sondra directs the Gong to open the Show.
Children ceremoniously sound gong to announce every
new scene, and are featured in the “multi-gong choir”*



The Golden Phoenix bird flies. and stays

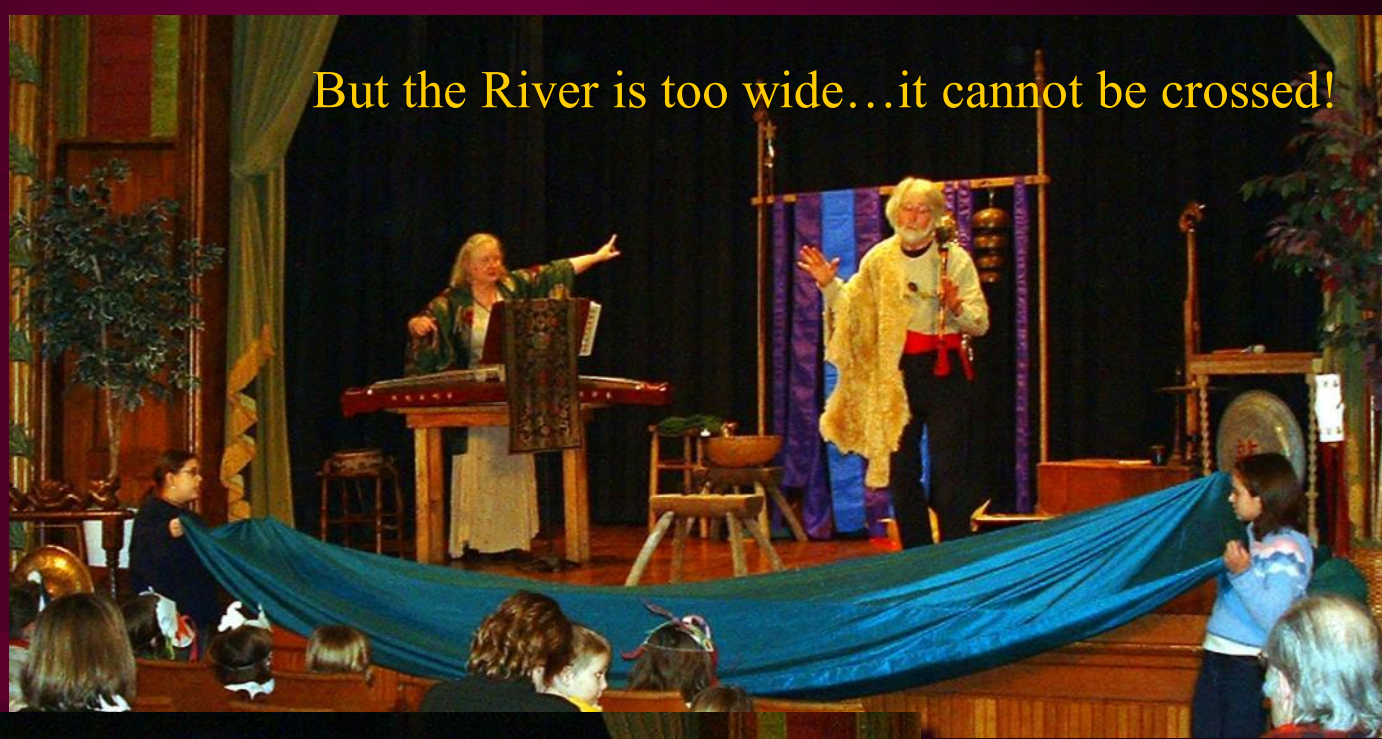


*Ghost Village Lantern Dancers arriving while
Sondra plays Chinese guzheng, John pip'a*

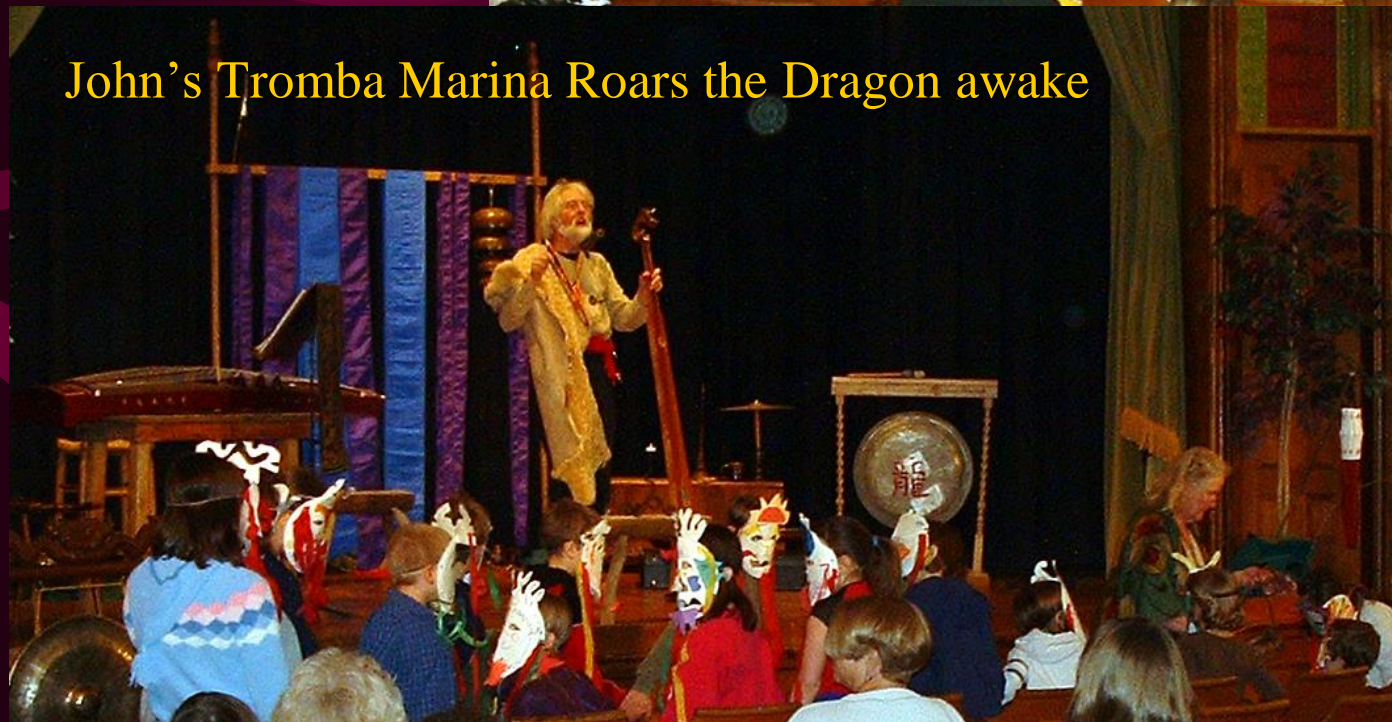
More scenes from “Bawshou & The Dragon” at the Aurora Opera House



But the River is too wide...it cannot be crossed!

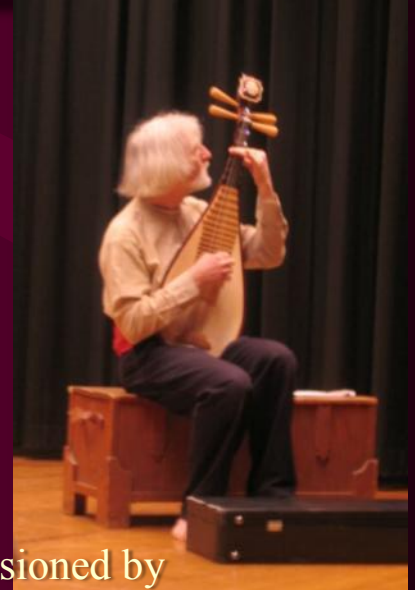


John's Tromba Marina Roars the Dragon awake



“BAWSHOU & THE DRAGON”

How this Chinese Hero Tale can become a participatory pageant



The original script is based on a beloved Chinese Folktale. Our play was commissioned by Springfield Art Museum, to accompany an exhibit of Chinese art, and includes traditional music on pip'a, guzheng, erhu, and a multi-gong choir.

In “Bawshou & The Dragon” pre-performance Mask and Lantern Making Workshops at Libraries, children create the tools that allow them to become part of the performance

- as the sinuous dancing dragon
- as ghost village lantern dancers
- ceremonial gong players
- sound effects, percussionists, and more



preparing for our pageant



“Bawshou” lantern dancers prepare for their “Ghost Village” scene



preparing for our pageant



“CHANTICLEER”



Chanticleer's Proclamation



The Apparition "Dream Team"



Meet Our Narrator:
Geoffrey Chaucer

4th Gr. Rebecca discovers that she dearly loves learning to speak many of her lines in Middle English. She surprises us all by setting Chaucer's famous Prologue to music. As Narrator, she was also responsible for prompting, timing, and cuing the whole performance team.



As with all our history residencies, students made all their own costumes from common items, based on what they saw in period art documents



Reynard the
Fox



Our Trusty
Farm Dog

Medieval Musical Theater :

“CARMINA BURANA”

“O Fortuna”

The ever-turning wheel of fortune, theme for a featured 14th song, eagerly sung by middle school students in Latin



Rehearsal with Katonah MS Latin students, in an early project prototype, 2006

Sondra and John have been going back to original 14th c. musical sources to take a fresh look, in their development of a new, authentically medieval-style musical theater piece for small ensemble of period instruments and voices, intended for performance by the artists in conjunction with school and/or community residencies...with a special eye towards enticing students to learn languages. They have scripted several other projects well-ornamented with languages other than English, such as “Le Roman de Renart” (Tale of Reynard the Fox).

“TRISTAN & ISEULT: The Harper’s Tale”

performances at venues ranging from Sterling Faire, to Indian River High School, Northern Kentucky University, and Kemerkooy Okullari in Istanbul Turkey



Part of the Arthurian Cycle. A great many early versions of the Tale of Tristan and Iseult have come down to us from the 12th century, from the time of the troubadours, and of the French Queen Eleanor of Aquitaine. The origins of the story are actually much older, harkening back to legends of the 6th century, in which Tristan, Cornwall, and Brittany all play a part. This telling is richly enhanced with period music on the artists' historic instruments.



...Projects in Belgian schools, following the students through
3 consecutive years of Flemish Renaissance programs and research

at Brussels
Museum
renowned
collection of
historic musical
instruments



Our 1st of 2 Trips to Turkey

“The Boy Who Went to Visit the North Wind” Performance, Istanbul



Bells + Motley in Istanbul, Turkey
“The Boy Who Went to Visit the North Wind”

November 20, 2002
Kemerköy ilköğretimi

Our ideas towards becoming better musicians, to inform our Medieval music “from the source,” and also to learn about Medieval History from a broader perspective than the traditional “Western European” approach, initiated an ongoing cultural exchange with this school in Istanbul.

Cultural exchange in Turkey, our 2nd Trip

“Grand Feast & Ball in Honor of Queen Elizabeth I,” with a nod to Wm. Shakespeare



Our Turkish
students,
their
Costume,
arts projects,
and
environment



We hope that you have enjoyed following us through our journey in the arts, cultural history, and all of their wonderful possibilities.

Thank you for exploring. Custom programs always welcome!

~ *Sondra and John Bromka*

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