

WORKSHOPS

Electronic Accordion: From Vacuum-Tubes to YouTube

Presenter: Bruce Triggs

The future of the electronic accordion has a past. The development of the digital MIDI-capable accordion was preceded by more than seventy years of experiments combining electronics and accordions. In this presentation Bruce Triggs will begin with the first analog vacuum-tube synthesizers and organs, and move on through the development of transistors and the electronic accordion's first attempt at global success.



PREREQUISITES

None

OPENING HISTORY:

- Accordions were connected to the very first uses of electrical media in the 1800s
- What antecedents later led to the first electronic accordions?
- Why did anybody want to make electric accordions in the first place?
- A word about amplification of acoustic accordions.

MANUFACTURERS AND INSTRUMENTS:

- The Hohner accordion company prepared to release their first synthesizers in the 1940s.
- The Farfisa Organs of the 1960s garage bands were a product of the “Fabbriche Riunite de Fisarmoniche,” or “United Accordion Factories” founded in 1946.
- Well-known jazz accordionists like Tommy Gumina pioneered electronics in accordions and went on to influence amplification for most other jazz instruments.
- The Cordovox organ accordions (and its many copycats) were played by top hit-making artists, but then almost entirely replaced by other keyboards.

THE FALL AND RISE OF THE ELECTRONIC ACCORDION:

- Why did the accordion fail as electronics took over popular music?
- What needs still face the accordion in today's world of electronics?