



TRADITIONAL ARTS ON THE ROAD: THE NCTA TOURING PROGRAM

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Traditional Arts (NCTA)**
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P A G E

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Since it began organizing national tours of folk, ethnic and tribal arts in 1978, NCTA tours have traveled to 49 states, and performed in hundreds of community centers, high school auditoriums, and major concert halls. In planning tours, the NCTA staff tends to hold to a three-point standard that was set with its first tours. First, all tours are conceptual and educational. While educational, these tours must never be “teachy” or “preachy” as such shows usually fail when put to audiences. Second, the material presented and the performers must have deep roots in a traditional place and people, it must belong to a people and be something more than a “style.” Third, a broad range of arts will be presented and not the commonplace stereotypes that come to mind whenever the word “folk” is mentioned. Therefore, these tours will always reflect the multicultural stance that the NCTA has taken since 1933.



A List of Past NCTA Tours

Green Fields of America - This tour of Irish-American music and dance visited Irish-American communities throughout the U.S. on four national tours.

Mountain Music Homecoming - This eastern tour of traditional Appalachian buckdancing, ballad singing, gospel, old-time and bluegrass music traveled throughout Appalachia and to mountain migrant communities in the North.

A la Mode de Chez Nous - Cajun, French-Canadian, Creole, and Missouri French artists performed for French-American communities in five states in the Mississippi Valley.

Echoes Of The Ozarks - A tour of old-time music, stories, and dance of the Ozark region featured outstanding performers from Arkansas, Missouri and Kansas.

Der Yiddisher Caravan - Two national tours of traditional Yiddish theater, klezmer music, cantorial and folk songs visited Jewish community centers and Hebrew homes for the aging across the country. These tours set off a mini-revival that continues.

Khmer Classical Dance Tour - Thirty-five survivors of the Cambodian holocaust presented their thousand-year-old classical dance and music tradition to audiences of Southeast Asians settled on the East and West coasts through two national tours.

Raíces Musicales - Marimba, *conjunto*, mariachi and Veracruz *jarocho* music and dance of Mexico and music of the Hispanic Southwest were presented on three national tours.

Teater, Visafton och Bal - The theater, music and dance traditions of Swedish America traveled across the country from Seattle to Chicago.

The Cowboy Tour - Eight working cowboys from Louisiana to Hawaii presented their brand of music, stories and poetry to audiences on two tours in the West.

In Performance U.S.A. - Blues and Zydeco musicians, mimes, street dancers and others performed for local audiences in the Bahamas and Jamaica.

Saturday Night and Sunday Morning - An African American heritage tour of blues, gospel, buckdancing and storytelling that toured the Southeast.

Masters of the Folk Violin - A tour of Irish, Cape Breton, bluegrass, jazz/blues, Cajun and Western long-bow fiddle styles that toured the nation four times.

Masters of the Steel String Guitar - Masters of blues, Appalachian flat-picking, Hawaiian slack key, dobro, jazz and rockabilly guitar styles toured the nation four times.

Voices of the Soviet Union - This tour, presented to audiences in the Mid-Atlantic and New England states, featured a seven-voice women's vocal ensemble from the far North of the Russian Republic, a "throat singer" from Tuva in Central Asia, a Georgian male choir, and a male duo from central Russia.

Juke Joints and Jubilee - Musics of the house party, the roadhouse and the church are brought together in this tour of African-American blues, R&B, gospel and juba dance, which has twice toured the nation.

California Generations - Honoring the passing of the cultural torch from one generation to another within families and communities, this tour, commissioned by California Presenters, featured the performing traditions of native, immigrant and ethnic groups who call California home.

Masters of the Banjo - Seven master banjoists offered a rich sampling of the myriad ways to play this much-loved American instrument with African roots in two national tours.

America's Master Storytellers - Narrative arts and humor by master storytellers from deep tradition. Four of America's best talkers presented a program of prose, verse and outright lies which toured in New England and the Mid-Atlantic region.

From Plains, Pueblos & Tundra - Native American music, song and dance of the Zuni of the Southwest, the Lakota of the Great Plains and the Yup'ik of south-western Alaska were presented in a six-week USIA Arts America tour of East Asia and in two national tours.

Echoes of Africa - An exploration of the African-folk origins of American popular music and dance through a juxtaposition of traditions from West Africa and the Georgia Sea Islands with older Piedmont blues and modern tap in three national tours.

The Memphis Sound - Examined the creation of new forms - early rockabilly and rock and roll - from regional folk musics in and around Memphis in the early 1950's. Toured in the Eastern U.S.

American Masters of Celtic Music - A tour celebrating the exuberant music and dance traditions, particularly those of Irish-Americans, which are flourishing in contemporary America. Presented in the Mid-Atlantic region.

Irish Fire - Irish music and dance by the young virtuosos whose innovative talents are fueling the current worldwide interest in this genre. Presented in the Western U.S.

The Big Apple · The Big Easy - This juxtaposition of New York klezmer and traditional New Orleans jazz offered an exploration of these two powerful musics which express the collective experiences of the communities from which they grew. Presented in the Eastern U.S.

The Perfume River Traditional Ensemble - An eleven-member ensemble from Huê, Vietnam, the former royal capital of Vietnam and a cultural and musical center for centuries, was presented in a two-week national tour that represented the first performance of the music of Huê outside of Vietnam.

Masters of the Steel String Guitar - A new version toured in the western U.S. in the Fall of 1999 and in the South, Midwest, and Mid-Atlantic during March of 2000.

Masters of Mexican Music - This celebration of Mexican musical heritage presented four distinctive regional styles of Mexican music and dance that toured the nation in 2004.

Masters of Caribbean Music - This tour offered a sampling of the rich musical traditions found in the Caribbean Basin including Puerto Rican *jibaro*, Haitian *twoubadou* and Trinidadian calypso. Toured the Eastern U.S. in the fall of 2005.

Music from the Crooked Road: Mountain Music of Virginia - This tour of old-time, bluegrass, mountain gospel and flatfoot dance celebrates the living musical culture of southwest Virginia. The outstanding artists participating in this tour link the past present and future of these deep American traditions. Toured the Western US in the fall of 2007 and will tour the Eastern US in the spring of 2010.