

Function: Treasurer



Phil Dallais playing a short of jew's harp designed by Harm Linsen (Leiden).
Photo: Harm Linsen (2006)

Philippe Dallais

Born in Geneva in 1969, his first encounter with jew's harp during his childhood was not particularly successful. He studied anthropology, archaeology and art history at the Neuchâtel University. During his first research fieldwork among the Ainu of Japan in 1991, an Ainu lady taught him how to play *mukkuri*, this was the starting point of his deep interest in jew's harps as anthropologist and as player. Stimulated by the works of Fred Crane and others, he is interested in the European, Siberian and Asian jew's harps in the fields of ethnomusicology, archaeology, and history. In 2001, he planned a fieldwork in the Ukrainian part of Carpathian Mountains in the search for the last *drymba* makers and to evaluate the musical, social, cultural and economical statuses of the instrument.

From 1996, he organised several jew's harp concerts in Switzerland, gave lectures, and developed pedagogical teaching programs in primary schools. In 1999, he invented a pedagogical multimedia suitcase for teaching music through jew's harp from different cultures. He taught jew's harp from 1998 to 2004 as a medium to discover other cultures and their music, an approach he called ethnomusicopedagogy.

From 2000 up to these days, he has developed a special jew's harp unit called Boîte à Guimbarde or B.A.G. in the museum shop of the Museum of Ethnography in Neuchâtel. The purpose of the B.A.G. is to show the diversity of jew's harps in the world and to enlarge the jew's harp collection from the Neuchâtel Museum of Ethnography which is available on the on-line collection database at <http://www.men.ch>. At the same time visitors can acquire several jew's harps, which are similar to the ones in the museum's collection, as well as several CD's and booklets. The B.A.G. gives the provision to jew's harp makers in the world to exhibit their work, so they can sell their jew's harps to a new and wider public.

In 2004, he joined the Visual Anthropology department of the Zurich Museum of Ethnography, and started to compile ancient and recent photographs showing jew's harp and players from all over the world. He realized a small exhibition for the 5th International Jew's harp Festival, Amsterdam, July 28-31 2006, at the Muziekgebouw aan 't IJ music center: *Jew's harp players in old photographs: Scenes and portraits revealing jew's harp in different cultures.*

Mainly a solist Jew's harp player on all kinds of jew's harps, he also plays in ensemble form, especially with Olga Letykai, a Chukchi throat-singer who also plays the jew's harp. Philippe interprets improvisations, and he is also interested in combination with electronic music and in all form of contemporary and experimental jew's harp music. His main teachers were Spiridon Shishigin, John Wright, Tran Quang Hai, and Anton Bruhin.

From 2006, he became member of the IJHS Board as treasurer.

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Online richly illustrated article on the Hutsul *drymba* from Ukraine (PDF of the English version on request): <http://www.ethnographiques.org/2002/Dallais,et-al.html>