



This article by Lisa Lynne was first published in the June 2022 issue of the Sylvia Woods Harp Center e-Newsletter

You can find Lisa's PDFs at [www.harpcenter.com/Lisa](http://www.harpcenter.com/Lisa)

**Lisa Lynne** is our featured arranger this month. Here's what she has to say about herself and her music.

Like many, my musical life started young. I grew up in Southern California, where I started with guitar at age seven. In my teens, I played electric guitar and bass in rock bands. My love of acoustic instruments led me to play mandolin at the Renaissance Faire, where I discovered the Celtic harp at the Triplett Harp booth when I was 21. I taught myself by playing along with my Pink Floyd and Led Zeppelin albums. In my heavy metal band's performances, I opened our last song each night with my harp and witnessed the instrument's sound transcend genre, subduing the leather-clad headbangers into a calm, content audience. I learned then what a special instrument the harp is.



For the next decade, I earned my living playing bass in a classic rock power trio and in top-40 dance bands, playing at biker bars and military bases. We worked months-long residencies in clubs and hotel lounges in Alaska and even at an airbase in Greenland. Throughout this period, I never traveled without my harp

I attended the Musicians Institute of Technology in Hollywood in 1987 and 1988. I played my harp at weddings and restaurants, inventing gigs in department store windows, speaker events, and the lobby of the Medieval Times dinner tournaments. I lived all around Los Angeles -- even next to the Sylvia Woods Harp Center, where I helped with harp tuning.

I busked and sold cassettes and CDs on the Venice Beach boardwalk and Universal Studios CityWalk. This led to many unique adventures, including a CNN story and invitations to perform at the International Buskers Festival in Nova Scotia. I continued to street perform all over the US and even in Canada and Germany. I played in shopping malls and rented booth space at art festivals, usually playing eight or more hours a day.

I created a record label and sold my music in music stores and catalogs. Then, in 1997, I was signed by Windham Hill Records, enabling me to join grand tours with many of the great acoustic musicians I had long admired.



In 1999, following the tragedy at Columbine High School, the family of one of the student victims informed me that my music was helpful for their critically wounded daughter to sleep. I traveled to Littleton, Colorado, and spent a musical day with the family. I posted this story on the HarpList website, and through the kindness of several harpists, we got the young girl a harp of her own. The experience gave me a new purpose in life.



I thus started the "Hands-on-Harps" program at the City of Hope National Cancer Center in Los Angeles, where we presented concerts and daytime music in the hospital. After the shows, we passed out harps, which doctors and patients could play together. This endeavor led to newspaper stories, grants being awarded, and donations of more harps. (You can watch my [introductory video about this program](#).) The program caught on and spread to several additional hospitals. I gave multi-media and musical presentations at medical conventions, showing other hospitals how to integrate music into healthcare. I kept traveling for concert tours and flew somewhere almost every weekend. My intense schedule continued for many years. Thankfully, my work and travel experiences resulted in a collection of more than 20 fine folk harps of all

sizes that I still take to schools, cancer centers, and elderly care homes.

In 2007, I teamed up with another veteran busker and multi-instrumentalist, Aryeh Frankfurter. We performed and recorded music together, featuring our harps and the numerous other instruments we played. You can watch a [5-minute video](#) that shows us playing several of our favorite instruments.



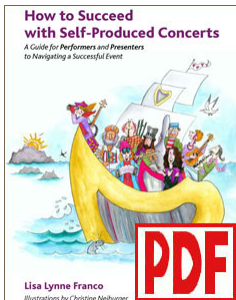
Patrick Ball came to one of our concerts in 2010 and suggested that we combine our music with his storytelling and wire-strung harp playing. We developed three different themed shows and toured with Patrick for the next eight years. We enjoyed great adventures in many places, including Alaska, Hawaii, and Ireland, where Patrick eventually moved.



Aryeh and I married in 2015. The next year, we bought a farmland home in the beautiful rural countryside of Oregon. It is a dream home with ten acres of scenic fields and forests, a recording studio, and a spectacular barn.

We continue to tour the west coast, preferring our trusty van and trailer to airplanes. We perform in venues large and small, often pulling a trailer full of harps to give folks a hands-on experience in libraries, schools, theaters, and summer camps. We also perform Irish, Nordic, and Old-time tunes with two other musicians in a group called the New World String Project.

We converted our Oregon barn into a Folk Arts Center, hosting concerts and workshops from artists around the world. The barn also houses my side business, a large store on wheels called [Goddess Wear Recycled](#). I also give mosaic art workshops on the art deck during the warmer months. I have joined the ArtsCare program at Good Samaritan hospitals, which brings music and art to patients. Consequently, I still get to play in a hospital setting.



In 2018, I wrote [How to Succeed with Self-Produced Concerts: A guide for Performers and Presenters](#), a book about creating tours and concert promotion. I have also published two books of my original music: [Music for a Peaceful Heart, Volume 1](#) and [Volume 2](#).

I write a [quarterly online newsletter](#) and keep a video blog on my [YouTube channel](#). These help me reflect on my life: the adventures, the setbacks, and the vision it takes to create a dream that comes true. The harp has a profound effect on people -- both listening and playing. My life has indeed been graced by this beautiful instrument, and I am dedicated to finding ways to give back and return the bounty I have enjoyed. I will do this for the rest of my life, and I'm living happily ever after.

-- Lisa Lynne

You can contact Lisa Lynne Franco through her [website](#), [YouTube Channel](#), [Facebook](#), and [Instagram](#).

**\*EDITOR'S NOTE:** Lisa Lynne's husband, harpist and multi-instrumentalist Aryeh Frankfurter, will be featured in an upcoming newsletter!