



## Italy's "Taranta" Masters CANZONIERE GRECANICO SALENTINO Return to North America

(June 17, 2013)



New concerts ( June 25 - July 14) with Leading Band in Revival of Salento Region's Mesmerizing "Spider Dance" Music. Expands Global Audience for Centuries-Old Tradition

Italy's new-generation masters of taranta, Canzoniere Grecanico Salentino, return to North America this summer, with a debut at Montreal Jazz Festival and their first dates on the West Coast. A must-see band on the world music festival circuit, Canzoniere Grecanico Salentino - better known as CGS -- have established themselves as the leading force in the revival of the mysterious Italian folk style known as pizzica, or more commonly "taranta." American media response for this spellbinding, intensely rhythmic music, whose dancer has been called Italy's answer to the whirling dervish, has already been overwhelmingly positive, with glowing write-ups from The New York Times, Chicago Reader and The New Yorker, who called the group "utterly beguiling and trance-inducing."

Tracing its roots back to the sixth century, this hypnotic style of traditional Italian music drives

---



dancers into a trance-like state – ostensibly to excise the poison of a tarantula spider's bite. The propulsive rhythms were -- and still can be -- used to effect a psychic cure for more common maladies such as grief, depression and fear, much as American gospel music serves to lift the spirits of the downhearted. Taranta also uniquely embodies and celebrates the cultural identity of the geographically isolated Salento region of Puglia, in Southeastern Italy (the heel of the boot of Italy). This mesmerizing folk revival has now caught on with modern audiences on both sides of the Atlantic. Following the Irish folk revival of the 1990s, the Latin explosion of the early 2000s and Brazilian wave of the 2010s, world music fans -- as well as a new generation of Italians-Americans looking to celebrate their roots -- have embraced the wild, transporting sounds of CGS.

Recent CGS tours have taken the band to such high profile stops as Austin's SXSW, NYC's GlobalFEST, Washington, DC's Kennedy Center and the international WOMEX Festival, as well as places off the beaten track, winning fans wherever they go.

Hailing from Lecce in Salento, the seven-piece band + female dancer have spearheaded the Italian taranta revival since their founding in 1975. After starting out playing small local folk festivals, CGS now regularly perform for festival crowds in the tens of thousands. Picking up on the band's rise, noted world music magazine fRoots placed CGS on the cover of its May, 2013 issue, joining such iconic cover artists as The Chieftains, Konono No. 1, and others.

The band is now touring in support of their latest CD on the Ponderosa label, Pizzica Indiviolata (roughly "Demonic Pizzica"), which entered the World Music Charts in Europe at #2 in December 2012 and which features guest appearances by Malian kora virtuoso Ballaké Sissoko and the critically acclaimed singer-songwriter Piers Faccini.

"I think it's timeless, mysterious and haunting music that is underlined by the great impact of the dance," bandleader Mauro Durante points out. "Our music talks directly to the inner, instinctive and archetypal part of everybody – it still has the power to bring you elsewhere."

The brainchild of writer Rina Durante, CGS was handed down in 2007 from founding musician Daniele Durante to his son Mauro, an already noted percussionist and violinist who had performed with Stewart Copeland of the Police and Ibrahim Maalouf. He has given the band a second life and a global reach. Maintaining the tradition while bringing in elements Middle Eastern, Balkan and Celtic music, the band was awarded Best Italian World Music Group at Italy's MEI confab in 2010.

The group features Mauro Durante (violin, frame drums and voice), Giulio Bianco (bagpipes, recorders, ciaramella, harmonica and bass), Emanuele Licci (voice, guitar and bouzouki), Maria Mazzotta (voice and percussion), Massimiliano Morabito (diatonic accordion), Giancarlo Paglialonga (voice, tamburello and percussion), Silvia Perrone (dance).

CGS is now riding the crest of a new wave of interest in Southern Italy's "Pizzica Taranta" music and dance traditions, carrying Puglia's heady and healing music to today's global audience.

CGS NORTH AMERICAN TOUR – SUMMER 2013



June 25	New Haven, CT	Festival of Arts and Ideas
June 27	New York, NY	Joe's Pub
June 28	Baltimore, MD	Creative Alliance
June 29	Pasadena, CA	Levitt Pavilion
June 30	Los Angeles, CA	Los Globos
July 2	San Francisco, CA	Cafe du Nord
July 4	Montreal, QUE, CN	Montreal Jazz Festival
July 5	London, ONT, CN	Sunfest (also July 7)
July 6	Detroit, MI	Concert of Colors
July 7	London, ONT, CN	Sunfest (also July 5)
July 10	Rochester, MN	Public Library (3pm) + Paramount Theatre (7pm)
July 11	Rochester, MN	Peace Plaza
July 13 & 14	Butte, MT	Montana Folk Fest

**Source URL:** <http://iitaly.org/magazine/events/reports/article/italys-taranta-masters-canzoniere-grecanico-salentino-return-north>

#### Links

[1] <http://iitaly.org/files/canzonieregrecanico1371450070jpg>