POST CONFERENCE REPORT
30TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE
This year’s conference broke attendance records for the fourth straight year as we celebrated FAI’s 30th anniversary. With 2,855 attendees (including 1,109 first-timers!) from 35 countries, our event continues to be the largest folk family gathering in the world.

Over five days at the Westin Crown Center, together we experienced hundreds of curated programs and events and literally thousands of performances. The document that follows represents a select overview of the stories and the people of FAI’s 30th conference: A Celebration of Community and Song.

Mary Chapin Carpenter addressed gender politics, ageism, and standards of beauty in the music industry in her keynote presentation. Carpenter spoke candidly about navigating difficult realities and shared how despite it all, she still finds joy and connection in the creative process.

Richard Thompson, Fairport Convention co-founder, was interviewed by Steve Winick of the American Folklife Center in front of a packed crowd in the panoramic Benton’s room.

John Oates of Hall & Oates, the best-selling duo of all time, got the full FAI experience. Oates performed an Official Showcase, presented the People’s Voice Award to Bonnie Raitt at the IFMAs, and provided a masterclass at the conference.

Longtime FAI attendee, Dar Williams, performed an Official Showcase, and spoke as a panelist for the Women in Music panel.

The 2018 International Folk Music Awards show at the Folly Theater, presented in partnership with Folk Music Canada, featured performances and appearances by Ruthie Foster, John Oates, Guy Davis, Giri and Uma Peters, The Kingston Trio, Anaïs Mitchell, and a rousing finale from Kansas City’s Staley Falcon Chorale. If you weren’t able to join the nearly 900 attendees, you can catch the full recording at folkconference.org/IFMAstream.

The 2018 Artist in Residence program connected Korean-American artist Henry Nam with students and instructors from the University of Missouri-Kansas City’s Math and Statistics Department and the Kansas City Art Institute. Together they collaborated on a project which explored the connection between music, sound, mathematics, and art. The team developed a computer program that created a visualization of a live percussive instrumental guitar performance by utilizing an MYO armband to track muscle movement and colors assigned to sound frequency data. Visit our YouTube channel (@FolkAlliance) for a video of the performance.

We couldn’t be happier with the attendance, program, and response to our 30th conference. Our goals were to honor the past, celebrate the present, and firmly set course for the future; we met them in spades. Onward to Montréal in 2019.

- Aengus Finnan, FAI Executive Director
Global Summits: For the first time, executive peer sessions were held to re-introduce a deeper connection to the processes, people, and policies behind the scenes that help establish and maintain the rich ecology of folk music. At the 2018 summit, archivists discussed innovative ideas for activating their collections, and cultural sector funders and policy makers discussed priorities and processes for greater efficiency and collaboration.

Kansas City Tours: Conference delegates had the opportunity to visit popular Kansas City performance venues during two tours. In addition, our national and international media attendees enjoyed a tour of the internationally renowned Picasso Exhibit at the Nelson Atkins Museum of Art (sponsored by Visit KC and The Nelson Atkins Museum of Art).

For the second year, FAI continued efforts to produce a more environmentally responsible conference, successfully diverting 4.2 tons of waste.

Sustainability efforts included:
• 4-stream monitored recycling and compost stations.
• String recycling stations. Sponsored by D’Addario Playback.
• 100% recycled paper and soy ink use in Program Book.
• Digital ads replaced posters and flyers on the Lobby & Ballroom floors.
CONFERENCE OVERVIEW

25 NETWORKING AND MENTORSHIP SESSIONS

3,430 PRIVATE SHOWCASES

180 OFFICIAL SHOWCASES

47 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PANELS

74 EXHIBIT HALL BOOTHS

84 PRIVATE SHOWCASE ROOMS

PANELISTS, PRESENTERS & PERFORMERS
GENDER DIVERSITY BALANCE

53% MALE
47% FEMALE

Those identifying as transgender or gender nonconforming were statistically negligible.

FIRST TIME ATTENDEES
RELATIONSHIP TO INDUSTRY

51% ARTIST
29% INDUSTRY
6% PRESENTER
3% MEDIA
11% ASSOCIATE

OFFICIAL SHOWCASE ARTISTS
GEOGRAPHIC CATEGORY

45% UNITED STATES
27% CANADA
28% INT’L

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“Now more than ever the cultural sector needs its leaders to be relevant, engaged, and diverse, and to look globally for content, trends, and collaborations … Folk Alliance does this in spades.”

- Julián Zuzgazagoitia, Director and CEO, Nelson Atkins Museum of Art and Panelist at FAI 2018

35 COUNTRIES REPRESENTED

Armenia, Australia, Austria, Brazil, Canada, Cuba, Denmark, Ecuador, England, Estonia, Faroe Islands, Finland, Germany, Honduras, Ireland, Italy, India, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Northern Ireland, Norway, Panama, Portugal, Russia, Scotland, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United States, United Arab Emirates, Vietnam, Wales, Zimbabwe
Each year during the conference, FAI artists visit community organizations and schools to share the joy and history of folk music with youth in our host city. This year during the conference, 22 artists visited The Ronald McDonald House, Children’s Mercy Hospital, and local schools (Academie Lafayette, Citizens of the World Charter School, and Quality Hill Academy).

Sometimes a simple conversation with someone who has been there can make all the difference in the world. Connecting Folk is a program that matches a first-time attendee with a past attendee to share tips and advice. For the inaugural year, 49 Guides volunteered to connect with 53 First-Timers who signed up for the program. Feedback from participants was overwhelmingly positive and the program will be back in 2019!

**Kansas City Folk Festival**

Our third annual festival drew over 1,500 attendees made up of the public and conference delegates. The event featured an artisan market, family programming, and multiple stages of local, national, and international talent. The lineup featured acts from each of FAI’s five regions, emerging Midwest artists, and headliners Mary Chapin Carpenter and Flaco Jiménez with Max Baca and Los Texmaniacs. Learn more at kcfolkfest.org.

**Louis Jay Meyers Music Camp**

The 2018 music camp was sponsored by Truefire. Nearly 200 attendees chose from classes in 18 distinct disciplines from renowned national instructors including Beppe Gambetta, Cathy Fink, David Amram, Ellis Paul, Guy Davis, Missy Raines, Redd Volkaert, Steve Baughman, and many more. Learn more at folkcamp.org.
We are as strong as the company we keep and we are inspired by the growth of this community and the tremendous warmth felt during our week-long family gathering of artists, entrepreneurs, executives, and folk music fans. We especially say THANK YOU to the 231 volunteers who donated 4,389 hours to assist in the production of the conference. It would not be possible without them. Profound gratitude to all. See you in Montréal!

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**THANK YOU**
Heartfelt thanks from the FAI staff and Board of Directors.

**SURVEY RESPONSES**
A post-conference survey was sent to all conference delegates and received 1,022 responses. The survey provides us with valuable feedback that we use to inform decisions and processes as we plan the 2019 conference. Thank you to all who participated!

FAI prioritizes inclusion, diversity, and international growth in our Strategic Plan. Presented here are responses to questions in the post-conference survey regarding FAI’s progress toward meeting related goals.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>2018 Report Card</th>
<th>2019 Priority</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>percentage of</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>survey respondents</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>who felt satisfied</td>
<td>who feel these should be priorities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gender balance</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>87%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Range of genres within folk</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>91%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Range of career levels</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>90%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Range of ages</td>
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<tr>
<td>International representation</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural diversity (language, musical content)</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presence of under-represented groups and people of color</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>89%</td>
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92% Overall Satisfaction*

*sum of “Satisfied” and “Very Satisfied” survey responses

“Folk Alliance is a hyper-concentrated reminder of everything that the roots music world has to offer, and I feel lucky to be part of this community.”

- Lee Zimmerman writing for NoDepression
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TIAMS.org

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9O
UNION Frames
THE BRIDGE
KPK
KC STUDIO
MUSIC CONNECTION
Banjo NewsLetter
STANDING PROJECT
FROM ART OF THE SONG
THE LIVING TRADITION

PARTNER EVENTS

Canadian Folk Music Awards
IBMA
CMA
18 WOMEX
GLOBAL FEST
MUNDIAL MONTREAL
AMERICAN MUSIKFESTIVAL
FOLK MUSIC ONTARIO
FOHK MUSIC

FUNDERS

Missouri Arts Council
ART WORKS.
National Endowment for the Arts
FOLLY THEATER
KANSAS CITY ARTS & CULTURAL ENDOWMENT
MID-AMERICA ARTS ALLIANCE
ARTS KC
REGINAL ARTS COUNCIL
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