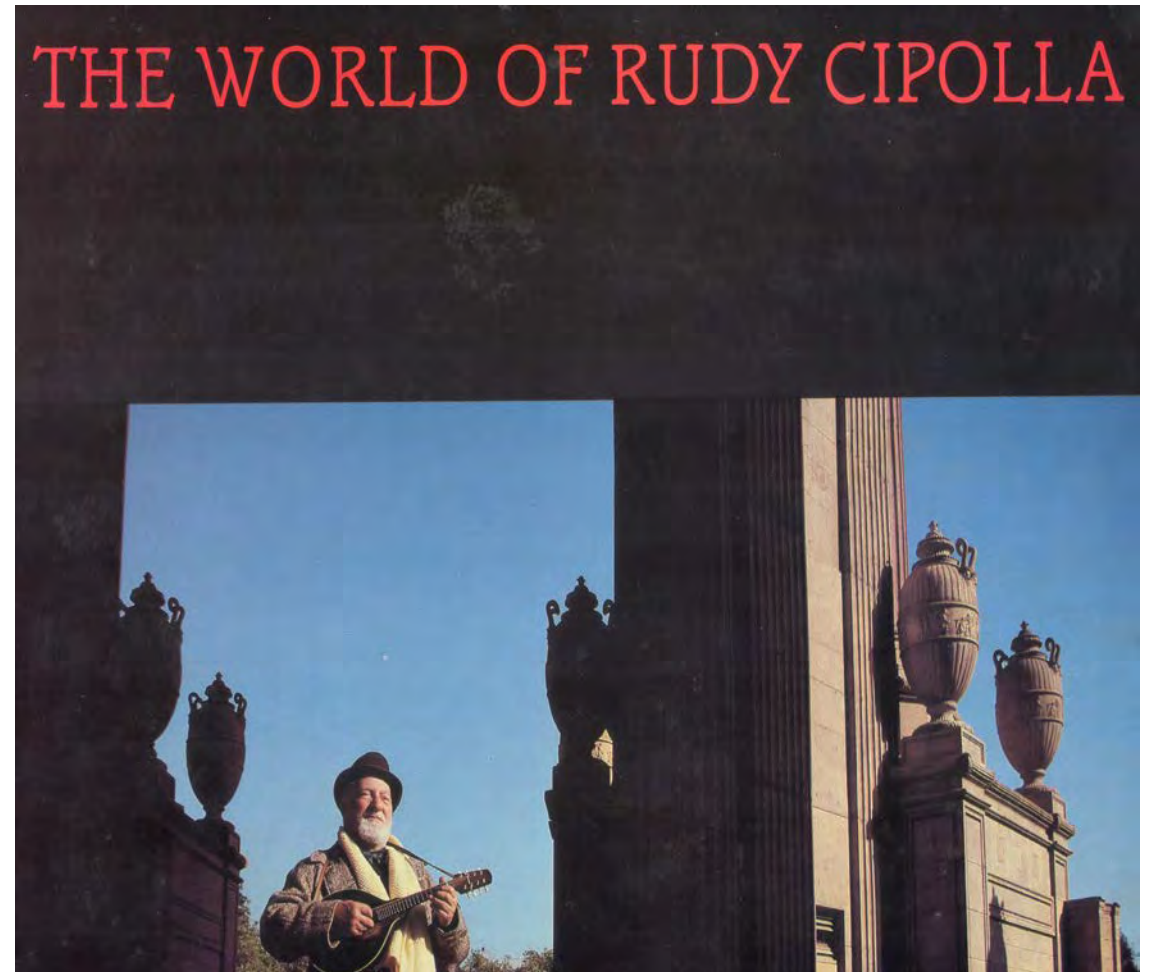


Celebrating Rudy Cipolla

San Francisco's
Maestro Extraordinario

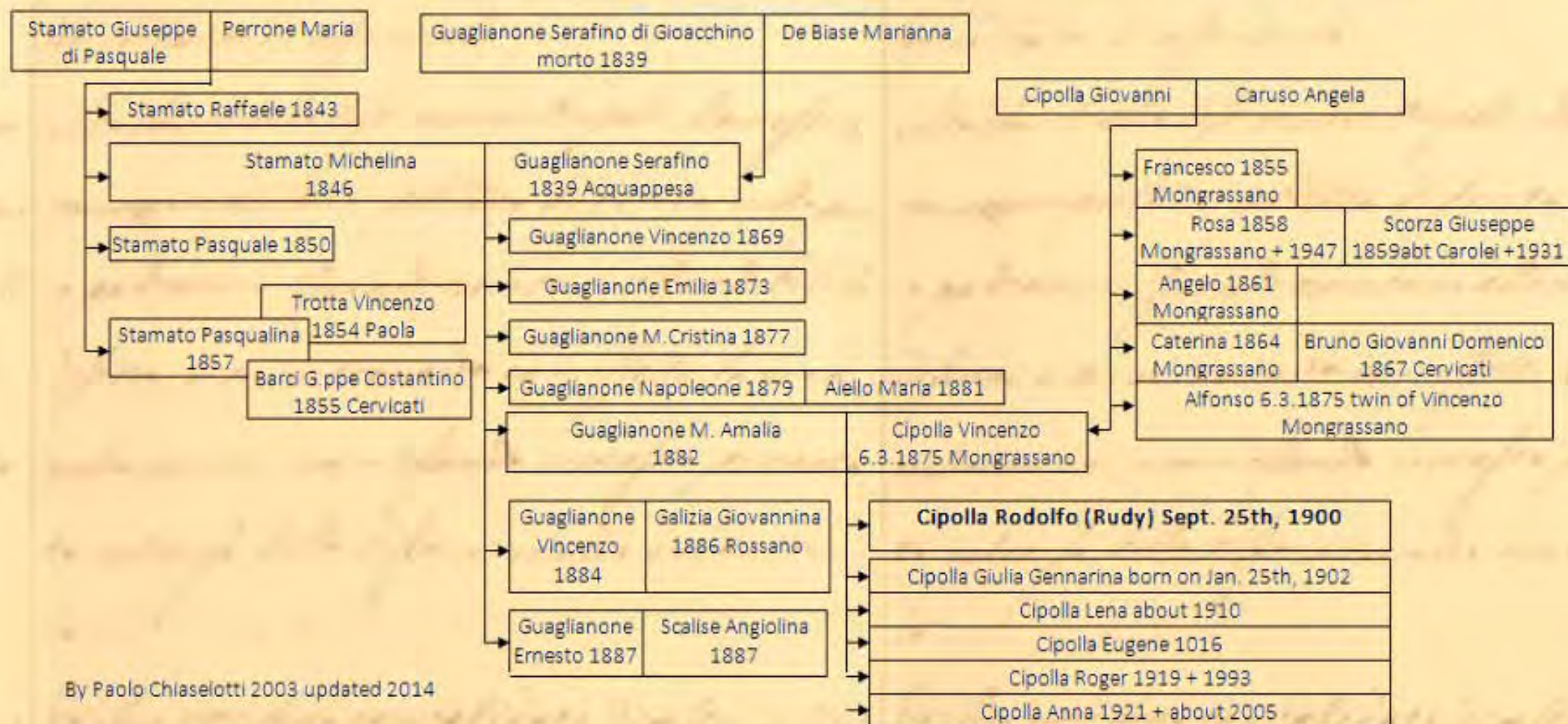
Zighi Baci Publishing ©
Sheri Mignano Crawford
September 21, 2020



San Marco Argentano Cosenza, CALABRIA

- Tucked away in a medieval town surrounded by the Massiccio del Pollino mountain range, is an ancient street named Via Giudeca where Rodolfo Vincenzo Cipolla was born





San Marco Argentano's village band



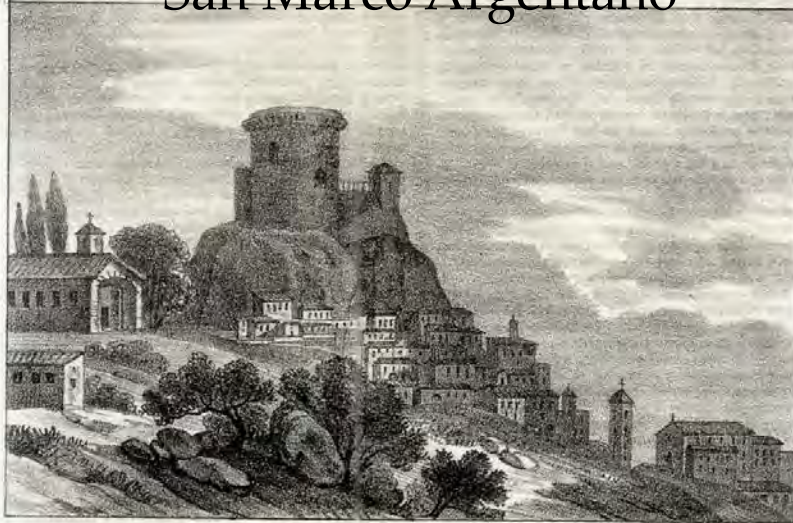
Rudy's life spanned three centuries; conceived at the close of 1899, born Sept. 21, 1900 and died January 8, 2000.

His birthplace was in one of the town's oldest back alleys.

VIA GIUDECA



naro, Porta Nolana e Porta di Chiaia. Compie queste opere, i Deputati di ferro presente di trecento ducati d'oro. Ma dove se ne va questa storia dipinta? Ve ne parlo se puoi! Gli uomini di ferro, i preti di ferro, i pinguicci, la grandine, i barbiere... Ma il mondo non era allora diverso da quello d'oggi. Ma il Vaccaro, e l'Giordano lo difesero sempre; e che ne' grandi ingegni non ha luogo l'invidia. Preti però non potea rimanere lungo ove tutti gli hanno mala voce: e se non era la



(La torre di S. Marco in Calabria — leggi l'articolo in piè di pagina.)

rimembranza di quel tale pericolo pel Canale violato, forse ne avrebbe fatta una delle sue. Ma Fra Mariano il Gran maestro di Malta chiamavalo a sé; egli aveva già fatto un S. Giorgio a cavallo per quella chiesa di S. Giovanni, opera che g'indivisiu dicevano del Giordano; e però senza indugio andò per Firenze, Siena e Livorno, e qui salito sopra una fregata, mosse per Malta. Molte opere fece colà per quei cavalieri, molto ne mandò in Italia, in Francia, in Germania, nel Belgio e nelle Spagne; due ne spedì in patria perché avessero memoria di lui: andovvi anche, e fondovvi una chiesa del suo denaro: e poi ebbe detto addio a Napoli, tornosene a Malta. Quello era l'ultimo addio — morì nell'Isola nel dì 13 gennaio 1699. — Come vedi da questa storia, Metoa Preti alto svegliato ingegno univa un carattere violento anzichonò: pur fu d'animo pietoso e benefico. Quando Napoli pativa pel caro de' viveri e lavorava po' poverelli: a chi lo avvertiva di non logorarsi nelle forze, sofferente com'era, rispondeva: *voi dite bene, ma questi poveri che anche patiscono, e patisco io fuma, come hanno a fare?* parole che bastano a farli un completo elogio son queste: mostrano la bontà e la virtù del suo cuore. Io quanto al suo merito dirò: ch'egli avendo avuto a maestro il Guericcio non solo, ma tutti i valentuomini d'Italia, avendo scorsi moltissimi paesi, e vedute e studiate le opere più insigni, avveniva che nel dipingere le sue figure venivan nuove e bizzarre. Fu eccellente nella parte che concerne il disegno, non tanto nel carattere delicato, quanto nel gagliardo e robusto. Così

non ebbe un colorir leggiadro, ma d'un forte impasto d'un chiaro oscuro che stacca, e d'un tuono generale quasi cenericcio, che par fatto per istorie di duolo: e però ei conoscendo se stesso, dipinse volentieri martiri senza onni pesitanze: e avea per costume dipingere alla prima, e sempre dal vero. — Non v'è angolo d'Europa che non abbia un suo dipinto, a Napoli ne lasciò dovizia; a tal che ricordando questi fatti, pietà mi prenda d'un tempo ove gli artisti dicono d'aver fatto il maggior de' partenti se durante cinquant'anni di vita arrivano a fare un quadro, e quattro o cinque bozzetti. Di chi sia la colpa no'l voglio dire.

Scritte queste cose volsi di nuovo il guardo a quel meraviglioso ritratto, e dimandai il Principe se potesse dirmi chi lo avea dato a suoi. E mi disse, di mano dello stesso Metoa, e fu dono di gratitudine pel benelizio ricevuto da uno di mia famiglia (1).

CESARE MALPICA.

LA TORRE DI S. MARCO IN CALABRIA (Frammento)

..... Il giorno se ne andava, quand'io accommiatatommi dall'amico, mossi tutto solo a visitare l'antica fortezza di S. Marco. Oh quanti svariati pensieri mi si affollavano alla mente contemplando quei muri alti e grossi sparati di macchie verdastre, quei merli mezzo rosi dalle piogge, quelle nere volte fuliginose rischiate.

(1) Profittando delle gentili profferte del sig. Principe di Arcofiumo, pubblicheremo nel Poliorama altri pregevolissimi quadri di cui egli è possessore.

Lady Liberty's Torch 1876



Rybka's advertisements 1922

- Rybka's Gibson (String) Sextette performed in theatres up and down the West Coast vaudeville circuit
- The basic repertoire mainly included full orchestrations of overtures, marches, dances, caprices, waltzes from the classical tradition.

MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS 901
MANDOLIN and guitar players, join Prof. **Rybka's** orchestra now organizing. No expense to you. Call at room 461 Multnomah hotel any day from 4:30 to 6:30 p. m. Prof. James **Rybka**

COMING !
Rybka's Plectrum Orchestra
Prime Orchestral Favorites
GRAND THEATRE
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 4TH
Admission \$1.00 — 75c —
and 50c, Including Tax
Tickets on sale at Moore's
Music and Will's Music Store



Joseph Rybka's Plectrum Orchestra

Rybka's Gibson Sextette



Rybka's Orchestra (Tom D'Ambrosio and Rudy Cipolla, standing with mandolins)

The Grand Theatre - Salem, OR

- Rybka's Sextette performed in lobbies of theatres and provided accompaniment for silent films in addition to private gigs. Rudy learned the classical literature repertoire.
- Rybka's group traveled extensively.
- Salem, OR
- Portland, OR
- Seattle, OR
- Mill Valley, CA



Rudy and Rudy

Rodolfo “Rudy” Cipolla (1900-2000)



Rodolfo “Rudy” Valentino (1895-1926)



The Argentine Trio 1931, San Francisco

Tom Ambrosio, mando

John Picadura, guitar

Rudy Cipolla, mandolin





NBC's promotional
media advertising

To Mark, with my best wishes
for success in all his
projects

Ruby Cipolla
9/24/86



Cipolla, left, with the Argentine Trio



Rudy, 1933,
with his
mandocello



The Argentine Trio (with unidentified vocalist)



Rudy's restored mandocello

John Picadura, guitarist & music teacher



- Picadura's attractive persona proved to be irresistible to the ladies and ultimately may have led to the demise of the Argentine Trio.

The Book Nook

In 1940, Rudy was unemployed with occasional gigs in Latin dance clubs. He and his brother Gino opened the Book Nook at 430 Judah, in the Inner Sunset district. Established as a circulating library, charging a nickel to borrow a book, he sold candy, pornography, weekly & monthly magazines, comic books, and daily newspapers



A studio portrait, early 1950s with
mandocello and mandolin.



Rudy at the entrance to the Book Nook, 1972

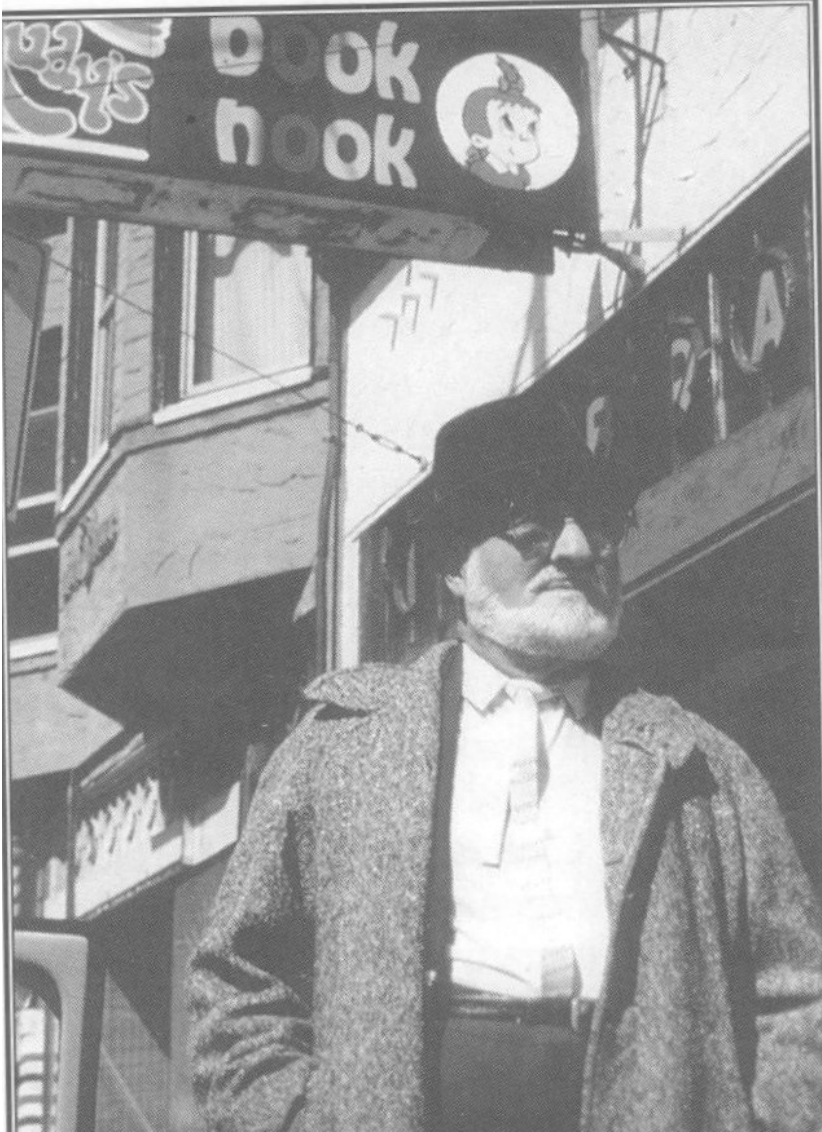


Rudy

1970 - 2000

- A fortuitous encounter, a connection, and a thirst to be heard and appreciated.
- Bob Bruen was in search of a teacher and introduced him to David Grisman. He became a regular featured composer on the Berkeley Mandolin Ensemble's concert programs.





In the late 1980s, the Book Nook transformed into a video store. Overnight, Rudy's rent was tripled, and the owner tried to evict him. The San Francisco Board of Supervisors voted to protect his tenancy rights until he died or left of his own volition.



Gino's Guitar Shop

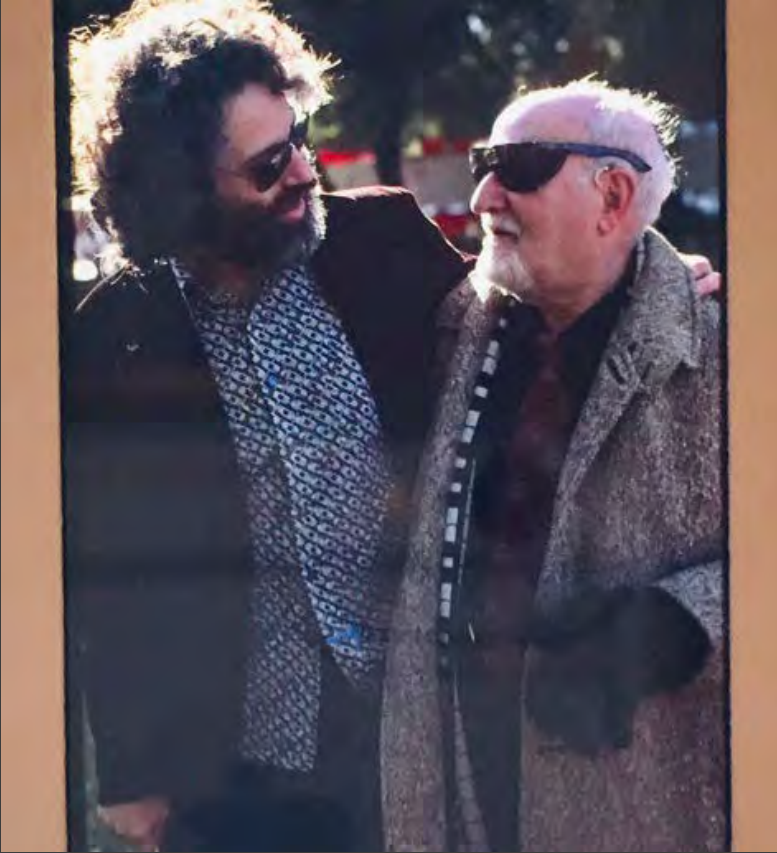
- Gino moved out from Brooklyn in the mid-1970s and opened a guitar shop across the street from Rudy's store.



Matteo Casserino and Gino Di Michele, c.1989

Rudy & the Dawg





Grisman & Rudy



- Backstage with Rudy

GIGGING WITH RUDY

A private gig with Rudy and

Gino Pellegrini, conductor of the
Aurora Mandolin Orchestra

Sheri Mignano Crawford,
accordionist with the Caffè Trieste
Band, Zighi Baci, and Mattinata di
Matteo.





Italian Festa Pier 45

- Tom Marion, guitarist and mandolinist
- Sheri Mignano Crawford accordionist
- with Rudy Cipolla



Bob Bruen & Rudy



- Sheri Mignano Crawford with Rudy

Matteo Casserino & Rudy, Caffe Trieste



Sheri, flute; Rudy; &
Tom Marion, guitar





Rudy at Caff Trieste, Matteo Casserino & Tom Marion

Caffe Trieste 1987

A Saturday morning at the historic espresso house. A rare event when Rudy played with Matteo Casserino, house mandolinist.

Strictly Italian & Neapolitan vocal classics, no Rudymusic!

Sheri Mignano Crawford, piano.





Berkeley Mandolin Ensemble



Rudy and his music appeared in movies.

“Capone” 1975 (Grisman music/Rudy cameo)

“Yes, Giorgio” 1982

“Peggy Sue Got Married” 1986. cameo
strumming an Italian classic

“Tucker” 1988 cameo, court scene

“The Grateful Dog”

“Their Finest” 2016 “Sunset in Capri”

Piano - Bass Viol

The Rudy Cipolla Ensemble



In Concert:

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 28 5:00 P.M.
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH, CAMINO ALTO + SYCAMORE AVE., MILL VALLEY
BENEFIT FOR THE MILL VALLEY COMMUNITY CENTER. ADMISSION \$6

SUNDAY, JANUARY 23 3:00 P.M.
JULIA MORGAN THEATRE, 2640 COLLEGE AVE., BERKELEY
ADMISSION \$6/\$5

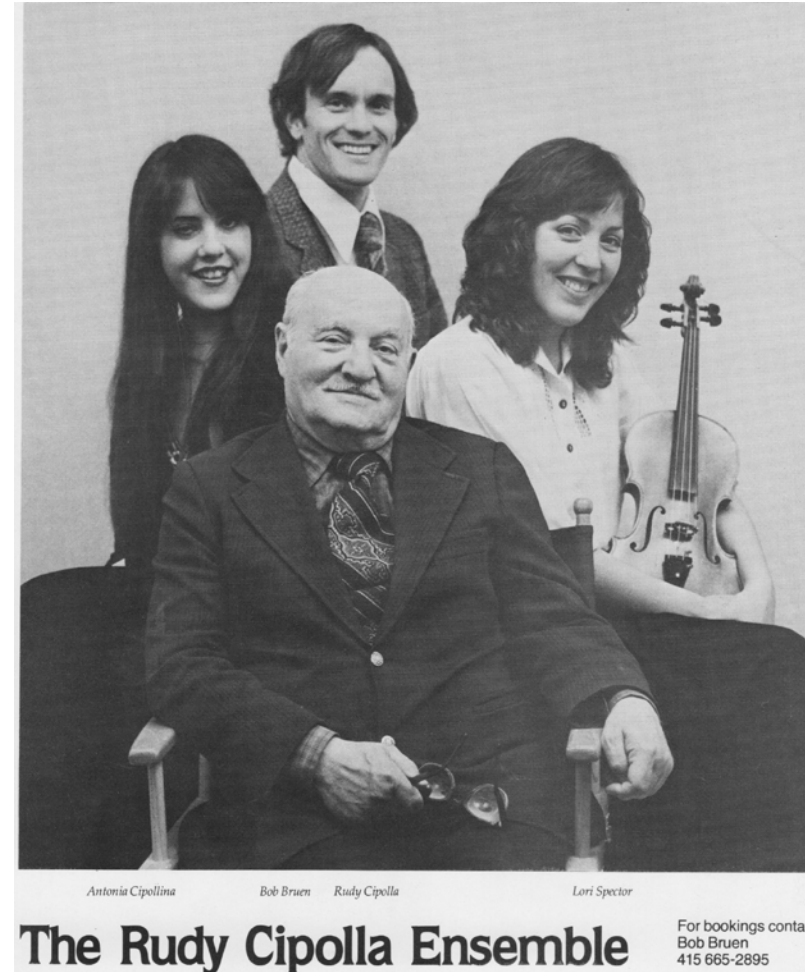
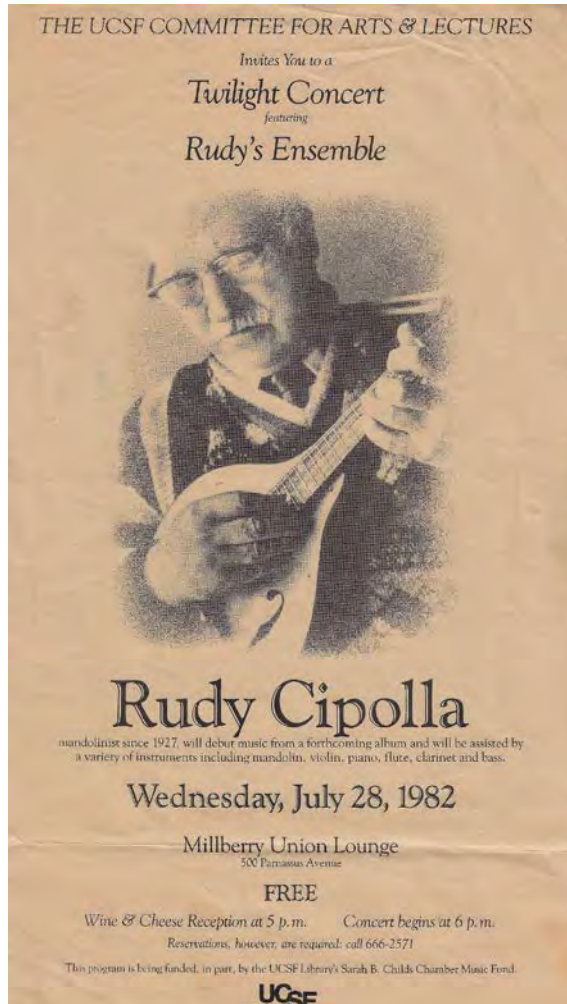
**ALSO APPEARING ON A PROGRAM OF WORKS BY
BAY AREA COMPOSERS:**

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 18 8:00 P.M.
KNUTH HALL - CREATIVE ARTS BUILDING, SAN FRANCISCO STATE UNIVERSITY
ADMISSION FREE!

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 12 2:30 P.M.
FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
2345 CHANNING WAY (AT DANA) BERKELEY
ADMISSION \$5/\$4

*See Rudy in "Yes, Giorgio" movie
album to be released about spring of 1983*

Rudy Cipolla Ensemble





Berkeley Mandolin Ensemble, 1989



In 1989, Rudy went to a Chinese herbalist who predicted he'd live to be 125! The next day he was hit by a car.



- Portrait of an American Original



Rudy Cipolla Memorial Concert
Freight & Salvage, February 7, 2000

Rudy Cipolla lived a full life.



- **His secret to longevity was Fernet Branca! He bought the mint flavored liqueur by the case and attributed his longevity to imbibing on a daily basis.**
- **He died January 8, 2000.**





CELEBRATING RUDY CIPOLLA ©



Sheri Mignano Crawford
ZIGHI BACI PUBLISHING © BOX 1784
BOYES HOT SPRINGS, CA 95416-1784

Photographic Credits accompanied by an abbreviated, slightly annotated narrative.

As much as possible I have identified a photographer, and the source who provided the photograph appears in parentheses. (SMC) =Sheri Mignano Crawford (BB) = Bob Bruen

1. Cover of LP: "The World of Rudy Cipolla." Bob Bruen, photographer
2. San Marco Argentano in the shadow of the Massiccio del Pollino mountain range. (Italian Wikipedia) Paolo Chiaselotti, archivist, wrote that "Argentanum was a place that fought with other little towns unified against Hannibal (Tito Livio, work "Ab Urbe Condita",liber XXX).

Chiaselotti believes that the Latin term "Argentanum derives probably from the silver mines (argentum). The town's name became San Marco or Sammarco, but uses Argentano to distinguish it from all the other San Marcos." Thus, Rudy chose the "Argentine Trio" as the name of his trio in 1931 as an oblique reference to his birthplace and to connect with the Latin tempos and gaucho music trend.

3. Paolo Chiaselotti, archivist for the San Marco Argentano genealogy * website. Roger date should read 1916. Rudy's chart indicates his baptism date, not his actual birthdate.
4. Paolo Chiaselotti, archivist San Marco Argentano website. 1907 school band was totally funded by the village so that music students could participate in various church events. As far as we know, Rudy was not a member and was not in this actual photograph. Chiaselotti wrote that "In 1861, San Marco Argentano's town hall decided to entrust a music teacher to form a musical band ["per una fanfarra, onde ingentilire i costumi"]. The pay was 40 ducati for year. In 1863 the municipal council decided to buy the musical instruments and for a budget of 30 ducati. Here is the original justification: ["per venir

istruiti sulla musica molti giovani cittadini i quali, comunque ben disposti ad apprendere le note musicali, pure non hanno i mezzi per l'acquisto degli strumenti"]. TRANSLATION: "...to be educated about music to the many young citizens who, however willing to learn musical notes, do not have the means to purchase instruments "]

5. Via Giudeca, San Marco Argentano. (Paolo Chiaselotti). Rudy's birthplace had no specifically numbered house, only the street name.
6. From the ancient Norman Towers of San Marco Argentano to Liberty's torch, 1876, Rudy's father first arrived in Boston harbor in 1902 to scope out America, returning with his wife, Rudy, and Giulia on September 23, 1908 (two days after Rudy's 8th birthday). As a barber, he took his family to Portland where he started a barbershop. Rudy learned to play mandolin and guitar from his father in the barbershop.

PORTLAND, OR. & JOSEPH RYBKA'S PLECTRUM ORCHESTRA

7. Rybka's advertisements and call for auditions. *The Sunday Oregonian*, June 11, 1922. Ran consecutively. Joseph Rybka was a classically trained musician.
8. Rybka's Plectrum Orchestra, *Crescendo*, August 1923. Vol. II, no. 9, p.1919. Retouched photo by C.W. Royd. Rudy, standing far right. Rybka, seated far left with mandocello.
9. Rybka's Gibson Sextette (photo used in liner notes of Rounder Records' "Portrait of an American Original". Rudy, standing far right. Upper Row: Claude Des Georges, tenor mandola; Tom D'Ambrosio, mandolin obbligato; and Rudy Cipolla, solo mandolin. Seated left-to-right: O.H. Anderson, solo mandolin; Joseph Rybka, conductor & mandocello; Charles Kreger, harp guitar.
10. Grand Theatre, Salem, OR. Wikipedia public domain. Playing in the lobby and sometimes book for the silent films.
11. "Rudy" and "Rudy" headshots. Valentino was the gaucho sensation in "Four Horseman of the Apocalypse." Rudy's headshot from NBC's

promotional advertisements (SMC) Rudy lived in the romanticized world that the other Rudy created. The sudden demise of Valentino must have precipitated the Argentine Trio.

RUDY MOVES TO SAN FRANCISCO 1931

12. Argentine Trio, horizontal (Earl "Pickles" Picadura). Tom D'Ambrosio (Ambrose), far left; John Picadura (replaced Ernie Lavorato) and Rudy. NBC created a preposterous story to promote them throughout the early NBC network system. They were described as childhood friends who grew up playing music on a wealthy Argentinian ranch but lost contact only to be reunited in America. A glamorous story barely true in that Rudy and Tom grew up together in Portland, OR., the sons of a growing middle class of Italian immigrants.
13. NBC's promotional photograph of Argentine Trio. This image appeared in all the West Coast newspapers. Much needed because there were at least three other bands calling themselves by strikingly similar names. (SMC)
14. Argentine Quartet with vocalist. L to R: Rudy; Tom Ambrosio; John Picadura; and unnamed vocalist (Mark Harris)
15. Rudy with mandocello, 1933. (Bob Bruen)
16. Argentine Trio with accordionist, Ernesto Chloe. After Rudy opened his store, he gave his mandocello to Tom D'Ambrosio whose family restored it. (Ambrose Family archives)
17. John Picadura (Earl "Pickles" Picadura). With lots of sex appeal and mischief with the ladies, Picadura's arrest in late 1939 landed him in a San Francisco jail and an embarrassing public trial for NBC. It, and WW2, spelled the demise of the Argentine Trio.

THE BOOK NOOK, 1942

18. Entrance to the Book Nook, c. 1980s photograph by Dix Bruce. (Dix Bruce). Rudy and his brother Gene bought the store where Rudy rented until he was threatened with eviction when he was 90 years old.

19. Rudy, studio portrait, 1950 with mandocello (floor). (SMC); Rudy, standing in front entrance to store. Photograph taken by Bob Bruen, 1972. Watercolor (based on Bruen's photos) by Tracy Bigelow Grisman, married to David Grisman. (David Vasquez)
20. Rudy seated at the candy counter. 1986. (Owen Hartford)
21. Rudy posed in front of the Book Nook. 1981-1982 from "The World of Rudy Cipolla." Bob Bruen, photographer.
22. Gino's Guitar Shop (Dick Morriale). In 1974, Gino Di Michele moved out from Brooklyn to San Francisco where he set up his guitar shop across the street from Rudy's store. He became Rudy's colleague and musical partner.
23. Gino Di Michele, harp guitar (Unknown photographer) and Matteo and Gino (unknown photographer) (Dick Morriale). Gino and Matteo had a successful twenty-year music career, playing at renowned venues such as Wolf Trap, Vienna, VA.

RUDY MEETS DAVID GRISMAN

24. David Grisman and Rudy Cipolla at Great American Music Hall, 1990. Unknown photographer. Bob Bruen, Rudy's student, introduced Grisman to Rudy in the mid-1970s.
25. Grisman & Rudy and backstage with Rudy (Unknown photographers) As their friendship and musical alliance flourished, Rudy's compositional productivity soared.
26. Backyard summer gig, Rudy with Gino Pellegrini, Maestro & conductor Aurora Mandolin Orchestra, and Sheri Mignano Crawford (accordion) c. 1984. Rudy did not enjoy playing the Italian classics, preferring his own compositions but he liked to gig with musicians and knew how to play along with the best. (SMC)
27. Italian Festa, Pier 45; Rudy, Tom Marion, and Sheri. 1987. (SMC)
28. Italian Festa, Pier 45; Rudy, Tom Marion, and Sheri. (SMC) I sewed Rudy a green peasant shirt so that he'd be wearing the Italian flag (metaphorically speaking).

29. Private gig, Sheri Mignano Crawford, flute; Rudy with Tom Marion, guitar. (SMC) and Matteo Casserino with Rudy Cipolla standing outside entrance to Caffè Trieste. (SMC)
30. Caffè Trieste, house photographer Jimo Perini. Tom Marion, guitar, Matteo Casserino, and Rudy. 1988. (SMC) Caffè Trieste was the first espresso house on the West Coast founded by Gianni "Papa" Giotta in April 1956. It and the Green Street Barbershop were the two major musical hubs for Italian concertizing.
31. Caffè Trieste, Rudy with mandolinist Matteo Casserino, and Sheri Mignano Crawford, piano. 1986. (SMC)
32. Berkley Mandolin Ensemble, late 1970s. Photographer John Pearson. L-R: Mark Bettini - guitar; Bob Wilcox - Mandola, Mark Harris - Mandola, Liz Lamson - Mandolin, Rudy Cipolla - Mandolin, Vina Cera - Mandocello, Dana Rath - Mandolin. (John Pearson and Liz Lamson)
33. Rudy Cipolla Ensemble concert program. (BB) List of Hollywood credits compiled by SMC. Rudy became most prolific in his eighth decade and produced a body of work that included at least 75 compositions, almost entirely dedicated to individuals who desired special music for a life event such as a wedding. In addition, his specially tailored studies and exercises for students may number in the thousands. Often, he would compose a specific arrangement with a specific instrumentation for one ensemble and often parts were designated for a specific player. Thus, it is possible to find several versions sharing the identical title. A confusing mess for anyone wanting to archive his compositions. The Rex Foundation helped a little but until SMC began to convert manuscripts to PDF files using Sibelius, it was impossible to read his illegible scores.
34. Rudy Cipolla Ensemble and RCE program. (BB)
35. BME, 1989. Photographer John Pearson (Liz Lamson) Top row L-R: Paul Segedin, Mandola; Bob Blanshard, Mandobass/Mandolin; Mark

Harris, Mandolin; Bruce Marsden, Mandolin; Marc Bettini, Guitar.
Bottom Row L-R: Oscar Berland, Mandolin; Sheri Mignano Crawford, Flute; Liz Lamson, Mandola; Radim Zenkl, Mandolin; and Vina Cera, Mandocello. The BME launched Rudy's popularity in the bay area as many programs featured Rudy's compositions. The premiere of "La Civetta" performed by the Berkeley Symphony Orchestra helped to establish him even more in 1983.

36. Rudy at work in the Book Nook. (Owen Hartford) Grisman's Acoustic Disc label produced "Portrait of an American Original" in 1997. Many terrific mandolinists appear: Mike Marshall, Darrol Anger, Radim Zenkl, and David Grisman.
37. Rudy Cipolla Memorial Tribute Concert, February 7, 2000 at the Freight & Salvage. Unknown photographer. (SMC) Top Row: L-R: Sheri Mignano Crawford, Flute; Matt Eakle, flute; Correa ?, guitar; Jim Kerwin, upright bass; ? violin; violin?; Bottom Row L-R: ?; Darrol Anger, mandolin; Radim Zenkl, mandolin; Mike Marshall, mandolin, David Grisman, mandolin; Bob Bruen, mandocello. There was supposed to be only one show but the turnout was so overwhelming that a second show was scheduled. It was a late night to say the least. I have been granted permission from Grisman to make public the Cipolla recordings we made that evening. Here is the link <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/0gdel2cmfxx2gc9/AADaWYjFF56CtSkVDIbTtvx1a?dl=0> or contact Sheri : Zighi@sonic.net
38. Bottle of Fernet Branca, mint. Generic adv. image.
39. Rudy at the candy counter, 1986. (Owen Hartford)

THANK YOU!!!!

Thank you's go out to Bob Bruen, Liz Lamson, Paolo Chiaselotti, Owen Hartford, David Grisman, the Ambrose Family, Earl Picadura, Dick Morriale, Gregg Miner, Dix Bruce, David Vasquez, Theresa Di

Falco, Mike Marshall, C.W. Royd, John Dillion; James Caputo and many others who've shown strong support for this project.

Dear Reader,

Thank you for taking the time to get to know Rudy Cipolla. He was an extraordinary musician with a kind and gentle disposition and a very generous heart. You honor him and his legacy by getting to know him. You can also learn to play his music by visiting my Drop Box folder (Slide 37).

At some point, this slide show will be converted to a video with his music.

Best Wishes! And here's to Rudy's 120th birthday!

Sheri

Sheri Mignano Crawford

<https://www.zighibaci.com> (to order books)

zighi@sonic.net