

An orchestra of one

AWARD WINNING VIRTUOSO CREATES NEW SOUND



By Patricia Ann Chaffee
Press Writer

NORTH KINGSTOWN – Since the age of seven, Susan McLeod has been playing the accordion. But she makes music unlike any accordion player most people have ever heard. Her sound convinces the listener they are in front of a full orchestra. Performing today as a virtuoso instrumental soloist, she sets up in only an 8-by-10 square-foot area, to bring life to private functions, weddings and corporate events. Her orchestral performances include everything from traditional polkas to classical, pop music to jazz and everything in between. But the music she creates with MIDI (Musical Instrument Digital Interface) technology is an eye opening experience.

Using a sound module, which

has on it every instrument in the world according to McLeod, the accordion mimics that instrument. The accordion acts as a vehicle for the sounds. "It took me so much time to learn this technology. It is a traditional accordion retrofitted with MIDI technology." She has 13 floor pedals that she uses to create drums, harmony, and back up voices among other things. The music

McLeod makes are her arrangements, using no pre-recorded sound. She arranges music by day

spotlight

and performs at night.

A demo CD created earlier this year is making her sound available for folks who are in the market for a musician. A press packet, put together under the supervision of public relations manager and booking agent Stephanie Burrows of Exeter, is beginning to get the word out about this cutting-edge accordion player creating a whole



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Susan McLeod with her accordion. McLeod is a virtuoso on the instrument.

new sound. "Hearing is believing," says Burrows. "Once people hear it, it opens up more of an understanding." The packets are being sent out to vineyards, corporate events and places that may have an interest in complimenting their event with exceptional music. Her intention is to offer full orchestral sound without pre-recorded music.

McLeod first got started playing the accordion when she was seven years old and someone called her house to offer a ten-week trial of lessons. "I've stuck with it ever since," says McLeod. "I've tried to have the accordion grow with me

See McLeod, Page 2



At far left, McLeod poses for a photo during a 1975 awards presentation. At left, 1978 Rhode Island state champion McLeod with her award.