

American Vernacular Dance, “Halloween Magic”

\$600 Grant from the Alex Wilson Legacy Fund – October 2022

Jim Borzým of American Vernacular Dance proposed to bring in a magician, Erica Sodos, to perform during AVD’s annual Halloween swing dance, attracting new audience members and giving existing attendees a new and delightful experience.

American Vernacular Dance (AVD) had been hosting sociable swing dance parties, open to the public, with live music, on 3rd and most 5th Saturdays in the Avalon Ballroom for 15 years, with an annual special theme dance on Halloween weekend. The band engaged for the past several years has been the Flatirons Jazz Orchestra (FJO) of Colorado, which has a strong following and has always done a lot of promotional work for this dance and their other performances. FJO is an 18-piece classic big band playing music of the American swing era.

“The Halloween swing Saturday night is always well attended, including costuming and often a costume contest with prizes,” Jim said. “We like to make this a very special night.”



For 2022, AVD proposed to bring in a “magician” (Jim’s quotes) for part of the entertainment. Erica Sodos was recommended to him by the leader of the FJO. Ms. Sodos performs close magic, mentalism and stage work. Read more at her website, <http://www.ericasodos.com/>.

Reasoning that magic is a folk art with thousands of years of history, and agreeing with the grant proposal that the event would help bring new people to a popular social dance at the Avalon, heighten the overall experience for attendees, and introduce an unusual Colorado artist to the local dance community, the Alex Wilson Legacy Fund awarded a grant for \$600 for AVD to engage Ms. Sodos for this event.

Billed as “Erica the Enchantress,” Ms. Sodos performed two stage segments (instead of DJ’s music during the intermissions) and close magic during the first two dance periods. Close magic involved Erica walking among sitting patrons – people who were not dancing at that given moment. The audience enjoyed her performance and the evening was a success.

Alex Wilson Legacy Fund board members, advisory group members and staff were deeply saddened by the death of our friend Jim Borzým in December 2022. This report was prepared by Alex Wilson Legacy Fund staff.