

Gesine Bänfer

plays shawm, bagpipes, whistles, medieval and folk flutes, soprano saxophone and the 18th century English guitar, and is researcher and arranger for her ensembles. She is also a music producer with her own independent label: ahalani records. She loves medieval wind music, old English ballads, photography and dance music sans frontières.

She started her career as a singer, guitarist and drummer in the girl band Jawbone, which she founded at age 13. This was followed by stints as a singer in a rock opera and as a saxophonist in dance combos and big bands before specializing in historical woodwind instruments. As a shawm player she is prizewinner at the prestigious Bruges Early Music Festival Competition and winner of the Belgian BRTN radio award. Her research into the wind music of the Middle Ages has gained international acclaim and she has given lectures on the iconography of historical wind instruments at leading universities and colleges in Europe. As a bagpipe player she is prizewinner at the Rencontre Internationales des Maitre Sonneurs in St. Chartier (France) and won the German Pop Foundation's two awards: "Best Wind Player" and "Best Folk Rock Band". As a teacher she holds a Certificate in Waldorf Education from the Free University of Freiburg / Stuttgart. She has four daughters, a granddaughter and a grandson and lives with her family in Freiburg, Germany on the edge of the Black Forest.