

Music at Eden's Edge



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MUSIC AT EDEN'S EDGE BRINGS MUSIC TO NORTH SHORE SCHOOLS THROUGH YOUTH CHAMBER CONCERT PROGRAM

BEVERLY, MA, March 12, 2007 – Music at Eden's Edge (MEE), the North Shore's own resident chamber music ensemble, is bringing the joy of music into classrooms throughout the North Shore with its 2007 Youth Chamber Concert Series. The program, now in its 17th year, began in February and runs through April in eight elementary schools in six North Shore communities – Beverly, Lynn, Gloucester, Salem, Ipswich and Newburyport.

The 2007 series began at the Carlton School in Salem, and has included visits to the East Gloucester Elementary School, Veterans' Memorial School (also in Gloucester) and the McKeown School in Beverly, where MEE presented this year's program, "Rhythm, Music's Renewable Energy." Other venues include the Winthrop School in Ipswich, Shoemaker School and Washington Community School in Lynn, and Bresnahan School in Newburyport.

Provided at no cost to schools, the Youth Chamber Concert Series teaches music appreciation skills while giving students a chance to experience live chamber music and work with professional musicians in a classroom setting.

"Rhythm, Music's Renewable Energy" features music a delightful assortment of selections from Bartok to Cole Porter, plus improvisation to a Shel Silverstein poem and West African drumming and chanting with the students.

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Joining MEE's Artistic Director Maria Benotti, violin, are Sarah Freiberg, cello, Neil Fairbairn, bassoon, Reid Jorgensen, percussion and Mark Berger, viola and violin.

“Since introducing the Youth Chamber Concerts in 1990, we have brought the exciting discovery of a wider world to more than 30,000 elementary school students on the North Shore – at no cost to the schools. With its focus on rhythm and its fascinating musical selections, this year's program is designed to engage the kids in the extraordinary energy of all kinds of musical rhythm, which can open to them a lifetime opportunity for enjoyment and enrichment,” said Benotti. “Live musical performance is also a great example of teamwork and cooperation, which offers another valuable kind of learning.”

Developed to assist public schools in deepening students' experience with and understanding of the arts, the MEE program uses chamber music performances and literature to teach four rotating topics of music fundamentals - musical structure; rhythm, the motion in music; approaches to listening; and cultural uses of music. The topics support the school music teachers' required Massachusetts Frameworks Curriculum by putting the music and instruments into a cultural and historical context.

Each segment of the curriculum includes a plan for an annual Residency Day when MEE players visit the schools and perform for each grade. Keeping the groups small allows students to participate in interactive games and improvisations as well as hands-on activities and a question and answer session. This format also gives students a chance to feel close to the music-making and share in the excitement and involvement of the musicians themselves.

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This program is supported in part by grants from the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency, as well as the Local Cultural Councils of Beverly, Newburyport, Gloucester, Ipswich, LynnArts and Salem – local agencies that are supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council – and by grants from Varian Semiconductor Technologies, DanversBank, the Marion L. Decrow Foundation, the Harpley Foundation, Rogers Family Foundation, New England Biolabs Foundation, General Electric and Medtronic Foundation. Individual donors in our community are also generously supporting these outreach programs.

For further information about the Youth Chamber Concert Series or Music at Eden’s Edge, visit the website at www.edensedge.org, or call 978-270-4463.

Founded in 1982, MEE has come to represent the highest standards of musical performance artistry. Its concerts feature extraordinary musical artists performing in some of the North Shore’s most beautiful and distinctive settings including the Peabody Essex Museum in Salem, Cape Ann Historical Museum in Gloucester, Hamilton Community House in Hamilton, New England Biolabs in Ipswich, Endicott College Chapel in Beverly and Northshore Unitarian Universalist Church in Danvers. MEE is known for creative programming that ranges from the Baroque period to innovative 20th and 21st century compositions, and for concerts that combine rarely performed works with more familiar and traditional pieces in the chamber music repertoire. Each year, MEE presents four distinct series – the Summer Chamber Music Series, Seniors/Family Series, Youth Chamber Concert Series and Family Concert. For more information, visit www.edensedge.org.

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