

midori & friends

INSPIRING CHILDREN THROUGH MUSIC

ADVENTURE CONCERT ARTISTS

Afro Brazil Arts

Afro Brazil Arts is a dynamic ensemble of four musically and gymnastically trained artists who perform in the diverse cultural traditions of Brazil, as well as in the art form of *capoeira*, a Brazilian self-defense and dance form that developed when African slaves were brought to that country. The artists of Afro Brazil Arts give interactive workshops in which students develop focus, discipline, and respect for themselves and others as they learn the moves, rhythms, musical chants, and cultural history of Brazil. Afro Brazil's highly participatory concerts give students exciting outlets for physical and musical self expression, and have been especially successful with middle school students. Grades 2-12.



Common Ground



Common Ground is an ensemble consisting of musicians from Puerto Rico, Nepal, and the United States who blend Afro-Cuban jazz with world music. Its members are graduates of the jazz program at Manhattan School of Music in New York City. The artists lead workshops focusing on rhythm, percussion instruments, improvisation, and the cultural background of Afro-Cuban music. Interactive concerts provide opportunities for students to try their hand at a variety of percussion instruments as they learn the characteristic rhythms of Afro-Cuban music. Grades 5-12.

Drum Café

For thousands of years, a vast array of cultures have used the drum as a means of communication, celebration, and passing on cultural traditions. Drum Café is an ensemble of master drummers in the African tradition that gives students the opportunity to learn drumming experientially, through communal playing with professional musicians. In Drum Café school concerts, every child in the audience finds an African *djembe* drum in their seat, and is allowed to explore playing the drum. As the concert begins, students and musicians play together. The Drum Café experience not only develops musical skills, but encourages a spirit of cooperation and the building of self-esteem and confidence. Grades K-12.



Fiesta Flamenca

Fiesta Flamenca is a colorful ensemble including dancers, guitarists, percussionists, and singers in traditional Flamenco dress whose participatory workshops and concerts bring students on an exciting journey to discover *flamenco* and other musical traditions of Southern Spain. In interactive workshops, children learn to sing traditional Spanish songs, perform *palmas* (clapping) and *golpes* (footwork), as well as create their own original dance moves inspired by this tradition. In concerts, the artists demonstrate the vocal, instrumental, and dance history of *flamenco* music, as well as the instruments inherent to the form and involve audience members in learning songs and dance steps. Grades K-12.



Forestdance



Forestdance is a joyous trio of musicians that plays the traditional music of West Africa and other African regions. With the *mbira* (African “thumb piano”) *djembe* drum, and *balafon* (African xylophone), Forestdance weaves a musical tapestry that tells of the history, challenges, and triumphs of African people’s everyday lives. Interactive workshops demonstrate the instruments and musical traditions of Africa as students learn traditional chants and movements. During the performance, students sing in call-and-response style and are also invited to dance. To bring students closer

to the African musical experience, Forestdance is graced by the presence of a true African griot, or *djele*, from a royal lineage of musicians, storytellers, and historians who remember and recite the traditions and history of their people through music. Grades Pre K-12.

Jason Poole

Classically-trained singer/actor Jason Poole studied the folk art and culture of Hawaii for many years with a Hawaiian master teacher, resulting in a life commitment to performing and sharing the musical traditions of America’s 50th state with young people throughout the world. In his participatory workshops and concerts, Jason tells stories and sings songs, accompanying himself on the ukulele, as children join him in singing and learning the physical movements that accompany the stories.. For special performances, a professional Hawaiian hula dancer performs and brings students on stage to learn and perform traditional hula dance movements. Grades K-5.



Taiko Aiko Kai & Manhattan Taiko



Taiko Aiko Kai was founded in 2002 when a few families of musicians at an Upper West Side public school began practicing Taiko drumming together, as a means of passing their Japanese culture on to their children. Workshops with the artists include hands-on drumming as students take turns playing the diverse rhythmic patterns of on the large drums characteristic of this tradition. Concerts display the dynamic percussion skills of the artists performing energetic pieces, and students

are invited on stage to review what they have learned in workshops, playing along with the musicians. Active participation in traditional musical calls and clapping patterns involve the whole audience. Manhattan Taiko is an adult ensemble drawn from the personnel of Taiko Aiko Kai for performance during school hours when the younger members of the ensemble may not be available. Grades K-12

Manjari

Manjari, whose name means “bouquet” in Hindi, is an ensemble that delivers a fragrant collection of music, song, dance, and stories from the Northern Indian. Fulbright scholar and master Indian *bansuri* (bamboo) flutist Eric Fraser leads workshops in which students are taught to sing, define, and display hand signals for various *ragas*, around which much of this music is based. In concerts, musicians demonstrate instruments such as the *tabla* (Indian hand drum), and explain the traditions of Indian music. Through their instrumental pieces and songs, musicians demonstrate the beauty and range of musical moods, from calm to exciting, in various *ragas*. Manjari often performs the Indian story of “*Cinduri*,” an Indian “Cinderella,” in movement and music, and students are asked to create and contribute their own movements. Grades K-12



The Mercury Brass Quintet



Composed of some of the finest and most versatile professional brass musicians in New York City, the Mercury Brass Quintet offers an exciting and engagingly interactive program ranging from 18th century Western European music and funk, to New Orleans and mainstream jazz, avant-garde improvisations, and transcriptions of orchestral and operatic works. In workshops, students explore the

history of brass instruments, from the horn of an animal to modern instruments. The group leads students in singing and identifying themes of a Bach Fugue and rhythms of a Joplin rag. Highly participatory concerts review what has been presented in the workshops, and students are invited on stage to conduct the ensemble in a rousing rendition of the “William Tell Overture.” Grades Pre K-12.

Melody of Dragon



Melody of Dragon, a Chinese music ensemble based in New York City, was founded in 1998 by four virtuoso musicians from the leading conservatories in China to build a bridge of musical and cultural understanding. Chen Tao, leader and founder, is an internationally acclaimed Chinese flutist, music educator, composer, and conductor of Chinese orchestras, who gives interactive workshops on culture and traditions of China's Northern and Southern

regions, including the role of nature in Chinese music. In these workshops, students learn Chinese folksongs and poetry from the T'ang Dynasty. In concerts, musicians demonstrate the traditional Chinese instruments, perform a diverse program, accompany students singing, and invite students to play percussion. Grades 1-12

Mexico Beyond Mariachi

In a delightful program showcasing the vast cultural expressions of America's neighbor to the south, Mexico Beyond Mariachi introduces students to the wide variety of Mexican music, song, and dance. Five musicians sing, dance, and play various instruments, bringing students on a musical adventure from the early music of the Aztecs, through the invasion of Mexico by Spain, to present day folk music from the many states of Mexico. Workshops and concerts illustrate how each region of the country has its own rituals, celebrations, costumes, language, and music. In highly interactive workshops, students learn the Spanish names of the instruments, phrases, and Mexican folk songs, and learn folk dances in pairs and groups. At the concert, students are invited to come on stage to sing and dance with the ensemble. Grades K-12



Nation Beat

Nation Beat is a group of five musicians who play music, rhythms, and songs from northeastern Brazil, introducing students to traditional rhythms and culture of this region. At interactive concerts, students sing and play on traditional drums in the rhythm *maracatu*, a propulsive style from northeast Brazil, steeped in African tradition. Concerts bring students onstage to participate by singing, playing, and dancing as well as encourage participation from the entire audience. Grades K-12

Opera Company of Brooklyn

The Opera Company of Brooklyn's talented young singers bring opera classics to young audiences with staged performances, English narration, and a pre-concert, "Meet the Artists"



workshop. In the workshop portion, students learn about the history of opera, the concepts on which it's founded, the operatic voice, the opera's composer and librettist, and the opera's plot. This introductory workshop gives students the insight they need in order to enjoy and understand the performance which follows. Recent performances include excerpts from Mozart's *Magic Flute* and Rossini's *Barber of Seville*. Grades 3-12

iRetumba!

iRetumba! is a multi-ethnic, all-female music and dance ensemble which traverses the music and dance of Africa and Europe, and its expression in the Americas and the Caribbean, particularly as it has come to be performed in repertoire of Puerto Rico, Cuba, and the Dominican Republic. Workshops lead students in learning traditional songs and dances of Africa and the Americas. Interactive concerts feature students performing with the ensemble as well as inviting the entire audience to participate in a feast of world culture and traditions.

Grades Pre K-12



Voices of Inspiration



Voices of Inspiration is an ensemble of young New York-based vocalists whose repertoire incorporates the sounds of traditional and modern day gospel as well as contemporary music. Each member has credentials from prestigious conservatory and university music programs, as well as international performing experience with some of the greats of the gospel and pop music scene. Together, they present a dynamic blend of gospel, R&B, jazz, and pop music. In workshops, students learn basic vocal technique as well as repertoire and

improvisation. Their rousing concert performances are highly interactive, encouraging individuals as well as the entire audience to participate. Grades K-12

Special Featured Artists for School & Family Concerts

Imani Winds

Imani Winds has established itself as one of the most successful chamber music ensembles in the United States. Since 1997, the Grammy-nominated quintet has taken a unique path, carving out a distinct presence in the classical music world with its dynamic playing, culturally poignant programming, genre-blurring collaborations, and inspirational education programs. With two members who are also composers and a deep commitment to commissioning new work, the group presents traditional wind quintet repertoire as well as music that bridges European, American, African and Latin American traditions. Imani Winds' commitment to



education runs deep. The group participates in residencies throughout the U.S., presenting master classes and education performances that reach thousands of students a year. Their programs include opportunities to learn about their instruments as well as the distinctive aspects of the music they play, and provides ample opportunity for audience participation.

Eileen Ivers & Immigrant Soul



Eileen Ivers is widely recognized as one of the world's foremost exponents of the art of Irish fiddling. As the daughter of Irish immigrants growing up in the Bronx, she was involved in traditional Irish music from the age of eight, and proceeded to win nine All-Ireland fiddle championships. But she also pursued an interest in the music of a variety of other cultures she experienced around her, and incorporates elements from these in her performances with her group Immigrant Soul, which features a roster of world-class artists from the arenas of jazz and world music. These high-energy concerts encompass both the traditional and the contemporary, providing opportunities for audience members to learn about the instruments, playing techniques, and origins of the selections, as well as dance along with the band.

Simon Shaheen

Shaheen is one of the most significant Arab musicians and composers of his generation. His work incorporates and reflects a legacy of Arabic music, while it forges ahead to new frontiers, embracing many different styles in the process. Simon Shaheen dazzles his listeners as he deftly leaps from traditional Arabic sounds to jazz and Western classical styles. His soaring technique, melodic ingenuity, and unparalleled grace have earned him international acclaim as a virtuoso on the oud and violin.



Midori

The violinist Midori made her legendary debut at the age of 11 when she was introduced as a surprise guest artist by conductor Zubin Mehta at the New York Philharmonic's annual New Year's Eve concert in 1982. Since that night over 25 years ago, she has established a record of achievement which sets her apart as a master musician, an innovator, and a champion of the developmental potential of children and music education. She and a small group of board members started Midori & Friends in 1992, and since then hundreds of students have had the unparalleled opportunity not only to see her virtuosity up close in their own school venues and classrooms, but also to talk with her and learn about her career and passion for being a teacher. Midori's interactive concerts cover a wide range of repertoire from across the centuries, and engage students in learning about the violin as an instrument as well as the composers and the music itself.



COLLABORATIONS

In partnership with other organizations, Midori & Friends brings other musical genres into our City's schools. Groups include:



Jazz at Lincoln Center *Jazz in the Schools* - Jazz in the Schools features interactive performances by prominent local jazz ensembles that bring the spirit of jazz to your students right on campus.

Young Concert Artists

The Future of Music®

BE THE FIRST TO HEAR THE BEST

Young Concert Artists (YCA) Educational Residency Program - Founded by Susan Wadsworth in 1961, YCA is a professional non-profit organization dedicated to discovering and launching the careers of exceptional, but unknown, young musicians from all over the world. Each year, YCA artists give hundreds of lecture-demonstrations, mini-concerts and master-classes, and "outreach" activities at schools, colleges and community centers throughout the country in connection with their concert engagements.