

Musical Introduction Series News

Dear 92nd Street Y School Partners:

The 92nd Street Y would like to take this opportunity to bring you up to date on your students' experience so far in the Y's 2009-10 Musical Introduction Series Program. This dynamic and culturally rich program introduces young students in grades K-3 to the world of music, both in the concert hall and in the classroom, connecting the joy of musical learning with current academic curriculum and providing multiple avenues for students' artistic engagement. The 2009-10 concert series started off on December 9 and 10 with the deeply inspiring and Grammy Award winning klezmer ensemble, The Klezmatics. Prior to the concerts, which were held in the Y's beautiful Kaufmann Concert Hall, each participating class received two visits from a 92nd Street Y professional musician teaching artist, who introduced students to klezmer by comparing and contrasting historical and modern klezmer ("Klezmer Then and Now"), singing in Yiddish, and learning how melody and accompaniment is used within this Eastern European Jewish musical genre.

The Klezmatics were followed by the bold, virtuosic sounds of the Boston Brass, a captivating brass quintet who performed repertoire ranging from exciting classical arrangements (The Overture to The Marriage of Figaro) to burning jazz standards (Caravan). To prepare for the concerts, which were held on March 3 and 4, students built their own homemade trumpets and learned to perform the most common articulations used by brass players. Each student also created an original drawing inspired by The Overture to The Marriage of Figaro and saw their work projected onscreen at the concert while the Boston Brass performed the piece.

Next up in the Musical Introduction Series is Arturo O'Farrill, a Grammy Award winning Latin jazz pianist and composer. In this unit, students will build their own bongos and learn to improvise on them based on rhythms they will hear in Arturo's band. They will also compare and contrast two versions of the song Caravan, one by Arturo O'Farrill and the other by the Boston Brass. Arturo dedicated a composition, Song for Chico, to his father, the legendary Latin jazz composer and bandleader Chico O'Farrill, and by exploring this musical dedication, students will discover how they can make their own artistic dedications by writing a Poem for Arturo.

Through the Musical Introduction Series, we are thrilled to bring the highest quality music programming to your classrooms and our concert hall and to inspire musical and cultural creativity and appreciation in your school communities. We are so excited to be working with each of your schools this year, and look forward to our continued work with your students and teachers this year and for years to come.

With warm regards,

Larisa Gelman, Director

Debra Kreisberg, Managing Director