

Events Spotlight: Youth Salon

This year's Youth Salon took place on March 26 at CityArts, and focused on the concept of Change Through Music. Phase II did a phenomenal job coming up with the theme and organizing the entire event, which included a lasagna lunch at noon (cooked by our favorite chef, Linda Kane), a student performance, and workshops led by the Phase II students on three different examples of music that inspired or agitated for social change.



The Phase II workshops included activities and discussions based on three different pieces of music: Shostakovich's Seventh Symphony (which protested the German invasion of Leningrad in 1941), a recent recording of *We Are the World* benefiting victims of the 2010 Haiti earthquake, and *Draft Dodger Rag* by Phil Ochs, written in the 1960s during the Vietnam War and the U.S. draft. Students and adults had a lot of fun learning about these pieces, and went home with a lot to think about!



After the workshops, attendees gathered in the CityArts cafeteria for an inspiring student concert. The works performed ranged from John Lennon's *Imagine* to duets by Bela Bartok and some fabulous cello improvisations in the key of G Dorian. It was a full and thought-provoking afternoon, and closely tied to our goal of inspiring our students to envision new possibilities through playing music together.

The Fellows go marching in

by Carole Bestvater

The Fellows Quartet had an exciting month of March. We (Aaron, Ariana, Robin, and Carole) had prepared music by Brahms and Shostakovich, and were ready to perform! In addition to concerts in Amherst and Cambridge, Massachusetts, we organized a tour of short concerts in unexpected locations around Providence.

First, we brought Brahms to the Knight Memorial Library, where a lot of people's ears perked up at the surprising sounds of live music. Later that week, we trekked out to T. F. Green airport and performed for travelers arriving in Providence. Then, we played Haydn at The Carriage House's weekly Friday Night Live event. Needless to say, the audience was surprised to see a string quartet come rushing in with stands, stools and instruments to play a tango and some Haydn at



T.F. Green Airport



Ronald and Heather Florence's Olyneville loft

the end of an evening of comedy skits. But when we finished playing, the audience erupted into thunderous applause and exuberant cheering!

Later in the month, on a sunny Saturday morning, Ariana and I joined other CMW staff and friends to run the St. Pat's 5K, an annual event that CMW participates in to fund raise for CMW's summer camp. When we finished the race, we rushed to transform from 5K champions to quartet musicians for a house concert later in the afternoon. The concert took place in the Olneyville loft of a CMW board member, a beautiful space that is perfect for concerts. The audience was full of friends and new faces, and at the end of the day, the Fellows were happy with their great performance and with the great conversations they had been part of during the reception.

For the last concert of the month, we returned to The Carriage House, also known as Everett Dance Theatre. We were delighted to see new faces in our audience; people we had met at the airport and at Friday Night Live a few days earlier had come to hear our full concert!

When the month of March came to a close, we felt proud of our accomplishments. We had put together a series of concerts and attracted new audience members. We had tackled difficult repertoire and successfully thought about different ways to think and talk about music, making the music we love accessible to many different audiences. The only missing ingredient? A CMW tour bus to take our students around town with us!

Jonathan Biss returns to CMW

On Monday, May 9, superstar pianist Jonathan Biss will visit Providence to perform an all-Beethoven solo recital. His program will feature four of Beethoven's 32 piano sonatas that he is recording for the EMI label this spring. A founding member of CMW's advisory council, Jonathan is donating this performance to help raise money to support CMW. Longtime CMW friends and families may remember Jonathan's previous concerts; in 2006 he performed the Brahms Piano Quintet with the Providence String Quartet at the West End Community Center and the RISD Museum, and in 2008 he gave a benefit concert for CMW with his mother, violinist Miriam Fried.

Seating for this concert is limited and reservations are required. There is a suggested \$50 minimum contribution per person. Please join us!



photo by Jillian Edelstein

Jonathan Biss, described as "one of the most striking North American pianists of the new generation," made his New York Philharmonic debut in 2001, and since then has appeared with the world's foremost orchestras. This season, Jonathan's recital appearances take him to 10 countries, with highlights that include his debut at the Edinburgh Festival, a recital at the Concertgebouw, and his much-anticipated Carnegie Hall recital debut.

Experiments in progress



During February vacation week, CMW was fortunate to host teaching artist Eric Booth, author of the fantastic *Music Teaching Artist's Bible*. Eric helped us think about some of the teaching "experiments" we've been working on this year - including studio classes, ensembles, and community days. In addition, we talked about more personal teaching experiments, and Eric challenged each teacher to come up with a "trim tab" experiment in their own teaching practice.

The concept of trim tab comes from airplanes and large boats: a trim tab is a small piece of metal that's connected to the edge of a larger surface on the plane or boat, and which can be adjusted relatively easily. The idea is that a small adjustment to a trim tab can result in surprisingly large changes for the plane or boat it's attached to. In the same manner, there are small changes that each of us can make in our teaching practice (or in any other part of our lives) that can make a big difference in our students' learning.

Inspired by this concept, CMW teachers have been designing and carrying out individual trim tab experiments over the course of six weeks this spring. One teacher has decided to ask her students come up with their own lesson plan at the beginning of each lesson. Another is having each of her students reflect at the end of each lesson on how the lesson went, and how it could have been better. Other teachers are experimenting with subtle adjustments in the way that they talk about practicing with their students, or how they talk about lessons with their students' parents. And some of the experiments are more personal, as well - including new approaches to exercise and well-being, and even apartment cleaning!

For each experiment, teachers have come up with a guiding question, a process by which to gather information, and specific data that they have been collecting. In another couple of weeks, we'll be sharing our results with each other. So, if every CMW teacher suddenly has a sparkling clean house, you'll know that the results from a trim tab experiment are in!

Experimental Fest in May and June



During May and June this year, CMW will be presenting a series of concerts around the theme of Experimental and Contemporary Music. In part, this mini-festival represents a continuation of a commitment to new music (think back to the “Listen Local” theme from a recent season, where we featured works by living local composers on each concert). But with this mini-festival, we’re also hoping to feature the idea that as a performing body, the CMW Players are exploring and defining a 21st century Providence style—commissioning and performing music that captures and contributes to the sound of Providence. What does it sound like when we create 21st century music as a group of professionals and students across this city? Listen and find out!

As a short teaser, look out for performances by the PSQ of the Osvaldo Golijov “Dreams and Prayers of Isaac the Blind”; another installment in Mark and Laura Cetilia’s successful “Ctrl+Alt+Repeat” series; an evening of solo music by contemporary composers including Forrest Larson; and an evening of experimental music curated by pianist Sakiko Mori that will include CMW students improvising. Check our website calendar for details. We hope to see you!

Summer camp returns

CMW’s Summer Camp returns this July. During the week of July 25, we’ll be taking a bus to Wickford each day, and we’ll end the week with a performance in our host space, Wickford’s First Baptist Church. Each morning will be filled with musical activities, led by CMW staff and alums (Kirby, Luis, Sidney and Josh plan to return!). Each afternoon will be spent outdoors creating new friendships and adventuring around the Wickford area.



photos from Summer Camp 2010 (image on right by Bobbie Hunger)



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Welcome to The Works Volume 5, Spring 2011

Spring greetings from Community MusicWorks! We’re in the midst of an exciting fourteenth season. Highlights this semester have included a record number of snow days (!), an inspiring Youth Salon at Providence CityArts, a series of Fellows Quartet concerts around Providence and beyond, a fantastic Community Day with special guests *The Quartet of Happiness*, and a visit from our friends at the Kanack School of Music in Rochester, New York.

Over the course of this year, we’ve been engaging in some big experiments, including our Friday All-Play Days, and our Saturday Community Days. These changes, which involve ensemble and studio classes for all of our students, address goals in our five-year Strategic Plan (outlined in last year’s newsletter and available on our website), including offering our students more opportunities each week to engage with our programming. We’ve been thrilled to see a general increase in the ability level of our students, and to hear all of our students playing together in ensembles at our Performance Parties. We have been hearing from families, though, that they miss the regular Musical Workshops - so look for more of these to re-appear on the schedule next year!

In addition to our programming experiments, we’ve also been doing some thinking around smaller, teacher-based experiments, inspired in part by two days in February that we spent with internationally renowned teaching artist Eric Booth. This spring, teachers have been working on a variety of experiments, large and small, some of which are detailed in this newsletter, and some of which you may hear more about next year.

If you haven’t made it to a CMW event yet this year, we have many more great events planned in May and June - including an experimental music festival and a special fundraising concert featuring pianist Jonathan Biss. We hope to see you soon!

Aaron, Ariana, Carole, Chloe, Heath, Jesse, Jori, Laura, Liz, Minna, Rachel, Robin, Sara, & Sebastian

