

TURTLE ISLAND QUARTET

Residency Activities

Lecture/Demonstrations

The Art of the Groove

An exploration of rhythm in classical and popular forms through lecture/ demonstration

- Audience: 6th grade through college level students
- Number of Participants: up to 1000
- Length: 60 minutes
- Requirements: Please refer to residency tech rider document

The focus in this program is on the fundamental rhythmic differences between European classical and American vernacular forms, using the rich historical connection to the traditional string quartet as the point of departure for a cross-cultural musical journey that begins with Beethoven and ends with...Turtle Island! Turtle Island identifies the "back-beat" as the key, unveiling it in its various stylistic guises with the help of the audience, and then the quartet embarks on a simple and methodical layering of the basic building blocks employed in creating a jazz string combo, one instrument at a time. Turtle Island discusses the various techniques that allow it all to happen, including innovative percussive techniques, emulation of other instruments (saxophone, guitar, trumpet, bass, etc.), neo-classical phrasing, composition and arranging, and basics of improvisation. One of the highlights is an exploration of the American fiddle tradition, utilizing the second theme of Dvorak's American Quartet. Also touched upon are odd meters in jazz ala Dave Brubeck, Hip-Hop/60s rock ala Jimi Hendrix, R&B ala Tower Of Power and clave rhythms of Latin American music. There is even a little fun with Vivaldi's Four Seasons. Throughout all, the back-beat rules.

A String Quartet is Like a Family

A special lecture/ demonstration program for younger audiences

- Audience: Kindergarten through 6th grade students
- Number of Participants: up to 700
- Length: 60 minutes
- Requirements: Please refer to the residency tech rider document

This engaging and accessible presentation for children in grades K-6 utilizes the model of the family to help students understand how a string quartet functions and thrives. Turtle Island draws comparisons between the interactions of the quartet and the audience's families, giving children a personal reference point that greatly helps them to gain a simple but profound understanding of the complete dynamics that drive musical groups. The children also learn to discern the many different styles the quartet presents, and young instrumentalists are presented with a new model of what is possible to achieve on string instruments. Members of the audience are invited to participate throughout the presentation, joining in rhythmic clap-alongs,

dialogue with quartet members and a question-and-answer period following a rousing rock and roll finish. This presentation can easily be modified to include middle school students.

Masterclass

It's About Time

Masterclass formats to fit every type of string program

Audience: Junior High through College level students

Number of Participants: preferably groups of 25 or less

Lengths: varying – will work with presenter to plan details specific to participants

Requirements: Please refer to the residency tech rider document

How often is it that young string students lose interest in playing simply because the musical options that are given have little relevance to their lives? The chance to improvise can be pure gold for such students. Turtle Island is fiercely dedicated to spreading the word that the bowed string instrument is one of the most versatile on the planet, and there should be no limit to what is possible to play and play well, be it Bach or the Beatles. To that end, the quartet offers masterclasses that fit every need, from one-hour sessions for beginners to week-long intensive jazz string seminars at educational institutions worldwide. Much of Turtle Island's music is available in sheet music form for both string quartet and string orchestra, and Turtle Island also has study aids that they bring especially for teaching. However, because the printed page can distract students from using their ears and intuition in creating these new sounds, Turtle Island avoids relying too heavily on written materials. Ultimately, this experience can leave the student with a much deeper appreciation of the storehouse of European classical literature that we all treasure and wish to preserve.



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