



Young
Audiences
Arts for
Learning

Western New York

For Immediate Release
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Note to Editors: Hi-resolution images
and artist interviews are available.

**“Young Audiences Travel the Erie Canal”
at Gusto at the Gallery, Friday, October 9, 2009**

-- Buffalo, NY – September 3, 2009 -- Young Audiences of Western New York will partner with the Albright-Knox Art Gallery to provide programming for children and families at two Gusto at the Gallery Free Friday events in 2009-2010.

Our first presentation will take place on Friday, October 9, 2009. We will feature elements from our popular, entertaining and illuminating “*Journeys and Journals: Traveling on the Erie Canal*” residency. The long-term residency was designed to support learning in 4th and 7th grade classrooms, when the Canal is studied. The program features music, theater, museum artifacts, creative writing, and visual arts was offered in 62 classrooms (over 1,550 students) in Western New York in the past academic year.

The focused topic and combined disciplines offers all ages a wonderful way to remain engaged with, and inspired by, our regional history. This program is an invitation to participate directly in the arts.

“**Young Audiences Travel the Erie Canal**” at the Albright-Knox Art Gallery in the afternoon and evening of October 9, 2009 from 4:30-8:30 pm, will offer the following ensembles and artists:

- **Gretchen Murray Sepik**, beloved actress, as “Surly Sal,” a cook who works on a boat on the Erie Canal.
- **The Stringmen**, award-winning musicians Doug Yeomans and Geoffrey Perry, perform and talk about music from the Erie Canal era.
- **Melissa Kate**, poet, singer and songwriter, interacts with young people and their families in “*Journeys and Journals*,” creative writing in tall tales, superlatives, and letters about life on the Erie Canal.
- **Helga MacKinnon**, visual artist, takes young people and their families through her “*Traveling Museum*,” exploring objects from the Erie Canal’s most productive time.
- **Gerald Mead**, visual artist, inspires young people and their families to create collaged postcards exploring the Erie Canal.

Young Audiences executive director Cynn timer Gaasch says, “The collaboration of Young Audiences and the Albright-Knox in providing these programs is a ‘win’ all around—the organizations, the community in general, and children specifically will be nourished by the creativity and powerful learning that will come from the partnership...this is an opportunity for us to showcase our quality programming to the community at large.”

When we offer this in schools: Young Audiences Erie Canal programs served over 1,600 students in 2008-2009. 54 of those classrooms were within the Buffalo Public School system. Erie Canal programming was also offered at Holland, Holley, Armor, Fredonia, and Pratt Elementary Schools. The majority of this programming is offered through grant support secured by Young Audiences and school partners. School districts also bring in programming with PTO or BOCES funds. We expect to serve more children in 2009-2010.

Young Audiences programming is designed around the belief that an arts-rich education provides a child with the ability to look beyond facts and figures; to creatively meet new challenges as they arise. Plus, the arts make learning fun. Introducing curriculum-supportive, arts-based learning provides a varied and compelling environment—engage even the most reluctant learners and give day-dreamers a classroom as rich as their imagination.

Young Audiences of Western New York, Inc. (YA-WNY) is a not-for-profit arts-in-education organization dedicated to making the visual, performing, and literary arts a part of young people’s lives in order to enhance their development as creative and productive human beings.

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