

Home / Lifestyles / Lifestyles

## Roll over, Beethoven: String quartet forges new trail fusing classical, contemporary music

- Story
- Discussion
- Image (2)

Roll over, Beethoven: String quartet forges new trail fusing classical, contemporary music

By MELODY PARKER, melody.parker@wfcourier.com wfcourier.com | Posted: Sunday, February 19, 2012 5:00 pm | (0) Comments

Font Size:

Default font size

Larger font size



Recommend

Sign Up to see what your friends recommend.



Buy this photo

Christopher Vuk. Courtesy Photo



### Apply for the Ethno-Urban Orchestra

High school music students can apply through the website [www.xibus.org](http://www.xibus.org) (click on Ethno-Urban Orchestra link and then the Apply link to access an application) or by mail to Boston String Quartet, c/o Chen Lin, 883 Cambridge Street, Cambridge, MA 02141-1430. The application fee is \$40.

Students must write about themselves and provide references. Once the applications have been reviewed, the students will be notified of their acceptance or if they have been placed on the wait list. For additional information or questions about the application process, call (617) 875-7851.

### Boston String Quartet performance

What: Boston String Quartet and the Ethno-Urban Orchestra

When: 7:30 p.m. Feb. 25

Where: Great Hall, Gallagher-Bluedorn Performing Arts Center, University of Northern Iowa campus, Cedar Falls.

Details: Tickets are \$26 and \$36 and may be purchased by calling UNItix at 877-549-7469.

CEDAR FALLS, Iowa --- In old-school circles, juxtaposing Michael Jackson's "Beat It," a suite from the "Harry Potter" and "Pirates of the Caribbean" film series and "The Devil Went Down to Georgia" with George Gershwin's Prelude No. 1 and Goleminov's "Bulgarian Folk songs" may not be heretical, but it might raise a few eyebrows.

The Boston String Quartet's penchant for classical and contemporary music fusion creates a stir, and their musicianship and sheer artistry is redefining the 21st century classical musician --- and growing a new generation of classical music aficionados.

Led by violinist Christopher Vuk, a graduate from Denver High School and the University of Northern Iowa, the critically acclaimed string ensemble will perform at 7:30 p.m. Saturday in the Great Hall at the University of Northern Iowa's Gallagher-Bluedorn Performing Arts Center in Cedar Falls.

"It's a cool concert," Vuk said in a recent phone interview. "We love trying different things --- it's fun for us, and we hope, for the audience, too."

Critics call Vuk an "electrifying violinist," and the nationally renowned quartet also features second violinist Angel Valchiov, violinist Chen Lin and cellist Christina Stripling. In addition, they'll be joined by the band Scarlet Fade and 100+ local high school musicians in an eclectic program, the Ethno-Urban Orchestra. Repertoire includes film music, rock, jazz and world music selections and original compositions by the quartet.

Vuk said there are two ideas at work in the quartet's widely applauded educational outreach. "Most kids in orchestra and band think classical music is their only repertoire. A violinist thinks he's only going to play Mozart and Beethoven. That's the mindset. Our mission is to show it's not true. If you don't like classical music, you can play jazz, rock and roll, whatever. It's all available, and it's perfectly plausible to do your own thing, write your own music."

Also, the quartet wants to emphasize the value of playing a musical instrument. Vuk, a new dad, thinks about his own daughter's future. "Kids are going a million different directions and it's so easy to be sucked into doing lots of things and doing them poorly. Through music, kids can learn problem solving, goal setting, commitment and do better in academic studies through learning to play an instrument."

Students write about themselves and provide references to apply for the Ethno-Urban Orchestra. Selected students receive the repertoire two weeks prior to the concert. Then there are four rigorous rehearsals and two improv sessions before the students take the stage to perform with the Boston String Quartet.

The UNI Suzuki School is hosting the program, and school music programs in a 30-40 mile radius are being targeted for participation.

Founded by Vuk in 2004, the Boston String Quartet has performed sold-out concerts around the country. recorded five albums, including the well-received "Xibus" and the new release, "WorldSong." Their innovative concerts have included a string circus program with an acrobat, a Christmas series and this fall, they'll be working on a concert with dancers from the Boston Ballet.

The quartet also has two other sought-after programs and residencies that teach contemporary music techniques and improvisation to students around the country, the Xibus Tour and the Xibus World Orchestra. Vuk brought that program to Waverly-Shell Rock High School several years ago.

Vuk began his music studies with Janesville violin instructor Pam Johnson and participated in the Wartburg Symphony and Northern Iowa Youth Orchestra. An alumnus of UNI, the Longy School of Music in Cambridge, Mass., and Boston's Berklee College of Music, he has performed at Carnegie Hall and played for such dignitaries as First Lady Laura Bush and Queen Raina of Jordan. He has performed with artists like Gloria Estefan, Bill Cosby and Jennifer Holliday, and he is director of the contemporary school, School of Groove.

**Correction added (2/20):** The original version of this story incorrectly stated the concert was on Sunday. The concert is on Saturday. The change has been made in the third paragraph of the story.

Copyright 2012 wfcourier.com. All rights reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed.

Posted in Lifestyles on *Sunday, February 19, 2012 5:00 pm* Updated: 10:55 am.

[Share This Story](#)

[Print Email ShareThis](#)

### Other Stories

- [The Government Inspector Review](#)
- [Delicious Tandoori chicken is gluten- and lactose-free](#)
- [Off the beaten aisle: Figgy jam loves to pair](#)
- [Bite-size variations jazz up mealtime or special events](#)
- [Delicious Tandoori chicken is gluten- and lactose-free](#)
- [Figgy jam plays well with many savory flavors](#)
- [Lenten season starts with a bang at Waterloo Methodist church](#)
- [Trivia contest bonds teammates](#)

### Sponsored Links

#### [Guaranteed Auto Credit](#)

Everyone's approved! Let your tax return put you in a vehicle today  
[www.stiversfordia.com](http://www.stiversfordia.com)

#### [lifestyles](#)

Find Personal Lubricant Online. Free Shipping \$50 on 100,000 Items!  
[www.Target.com](http://www.Target.com)

#### [Woman is 51 But Looks 25](#)

Mom publishes simple wrinkle secret that has angered doctors...  
[ConsumerLifestyles.org](http://ConsumerLifestyles.org)

**SEA BEST**  
QUALITY SINCE 1976

Every way you could imagine.

Recipes AdChoices

Coupon

Find us on Facebook