

**For Immediate Release**  
**Manchester Music Festival**  
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### **MMF Performs Free Concert for Area School Kids**

Emily Sullivan, a seventh-grader at the Maple Street School, was among the hundreds of area school kids who crowded into the First Congregational Church this fall for the Manchester Music Festival's annual free Concerts for the Schools.

They listened, they applauded and some even got a chance to conduct the Festival's 17-piece chamber orchestra under the watchful eye of maestro Ariel Rudiakov, artistic director of the Manchester Music Festival.

"I thought it was excellent," Emily said of the concert. "Very moving." Her sentiments were echoed by schoolmate James Riley, another Maple Street seventh grader who gave the program a rave review. "Excellent," he said.

The September 22 concert, which kicked off the Manchester Chamber Orchestra's fall tour, featured acclaimed harpist Bridget Kibbey. Ashley Stark, a sixth-grader from the Sunderland Elementary School, said Kibbey's performance was her favorite part. "I loved the harp," she said.

On the program was the music of Chris Theofanidis, Antonin Dvorak and Andre Caplet whose "Conte Fantastique" is a musical interpretation of Edgar Allen Poe's "The Masque of the Red Death."

Kibbey, to the delight of the youngsters, first explained Poe's story and then had the musicians play excerpts from the piece so that the children would recognize story highlights in the music.

The program also featured a special appearance by the Burr and Burton Academy Choir, led by Julie Freebern. "They sang an example of a medieval chant that deeply inspired composer Chris Theofanidis in his writing of 'Visions and Miracles,'" Rudiakov said. "You might say it's 1098 meets 1998."

In order to accommodate the large number of youngsters, Rudiakov conducted two morning performances. The schools represented included Sunderland Elementary School, Manchester Elementary-Middle School, Flood Brook School, Long Trail School, Northshire Day School, Maple Street School, The Dorset School, and the Mountain School.

After the concert in Manchester, the orchestra left for its annual tour which took them to Choate Rosemary Hall's Paul Mellon performing arts center in Connecticut, an arts center in North Creek, NY in the Lake George area and a floating barge on Manhattan's East River.

The school concert and tour were sponsored by Arthur Lombard and the late Freddy Lombard, Judy Rudiakov, the Enoch Foundation, the Orvis Company and The Greenewalt Trust, whose generous contributions made these events possible.