



EDGAR GABRIEL'S STRING GROOVESM

Art Form: Music

Style: Folk

Culture: Multi-cultural

Technical Needs

- ❑ Access to grounded AC power
- ❑ Two microphones on stands (boom stands if possible) into sound system
- ❑ 1 CD/tape player
- ❑ four music stands

NOTE: When the artist calls to confirm, please let him know which of these elements you can supply. If any of these are not available (except AC power), the group can supply them **if notified in advance**.

Meet the Artists

EDGAR GABRIEL (Violin / Electric Violin) is a violinist with over twenty-five years of professional experience. He has performed nationally and internationally with Rachel Barton Pine's "Stringendo" and with Cirque du Soleil. His expertise with traditional and electric violins keeps him actively performing, teaching, and recording. Edgar has published several works including String Groove, Ideas for Improvising. He is currently on the faculty of William Rainey Harper College and holds a M.M. degree in jazz composition from DePaul University and a B.A. degree in music from Northern Illinois University.

MAURICE HOUSTON (Bass) began his career at the early age of 5-years-old, influenced by his grandmother, the great trumpeter Tiny Davis. Hailed as one of the finest bassists in Chicago, Maurice has performed with notable musicians and singers such as Phyllis Hyman, Stanley Turrentine, Melba Moore, and Delion Richards. He has performed on recordings with the Staple Singers and

the Dells. Maurice is owner and sound engineer for the recording studio, Studio M.

INDERJEET SIDHU (Percussion/Drums) has been performing as a percussionist for over 30 years. In India, he studied Indian Classical music and Sikh Kirtan music with Sudhir Kushal, one of India's most educated and learned musicians. In the USA, Inderjeet studied tabla with Ustad Allah Rakha (Ravi Shankar's Tabla player) and Allah Rakha's son, Ustad Zakir Hussain. When he performs, Inderjeet incorporates eastern and western styles of drumming with rock and jazz bands throughout the Chicago area. He teaches all aspects of polyrhythmic theory and time-signature definition to percussionists worldwide. In 1996, he was invited to play at the Montreaux Jazz Festival in Switzerland.

STEVE DOYLE (Guitar) currently plays guitar with Ulele, The Fat Guys, Lush Budget and The Hoyle Brothers. In addition to the guitar, he plays the dobro with the Whiskey Hollow Bluegrass Band and is also accomplished on the lap steel and mandolin. He holds a B.A. degree in music composition from Northern Illinois University and has been playing the guitar for over 25 years and is well-versed in styles ranging from big band jazz to power trio blues.

FRED SIMON (Keyboard) composes music for recording, live performances, film, dance, and television. His recorded work includes six albums of original music under his name; three albums with the Simon and Bard Group; and numerous appearances on compilation releases by Windham Hill, Columbia, Narada, and Private Music. Fred has recorded and/or performed with numerous talents including Ralph Towner, Paul McCandless, Larry Coryell, Lyle Mays, and Kurt Elling.

*Note: for Urban Gateways performances, the group consists of a 4-piece ensemble: violin, drums/percussion, bass, and keyboards or guitar.

About the Performance

String Fusion takes the audience on a musical journey which transcends time, geography, and cultures. This musical ensemble combines old world music with new musical-styling and technology to create a true original sound for the 21st century. With the violin/electric violin at the core of the instrumentation, the musicians demonstrate infectious, driving rhythms and syncopations in a wide variety of musical genres. The program also expresses how classical, West African, Middle-Eastern, Asian, jazz, folk, blues, rock, and Latin music influenced each other. For more information on the group please refer to their website at www.stringfusionmusic.com.

Contextual Information

The United States is the birthplace of some of the world's greatest music: jazz, rock, blues, gospel, and country. As the melting pot for diverse cultures, America provided the platform for interaction on many levels. At times, this interaction was not always by choice. Socioeconomic reasons, such as the close quarters in urban living, necessitated different cultures to mingle. Alternatively, common religious worship and causes required people to congregate. For some, the situation was completely forced, as we find in the tragic situation of the slave trade in America. Regardless of the root cause, the result has always created exciting new music.

This mixing of cultures is relatively new in America. In the remainder of the world, it has flourished for thousands of years due to trade, war, religion, and great artists. Gypsy and Jewish migrants assimilated their music within the local countries. New styles grew from this assimilation, such as the Gypsies mixing their music with Spanish styles to create Flamenco. Great classical composers constantly sought out new styles of music to experiment with, such as Mozart's "Turkish" concerto, Beethoven's arrangements of Scottish fiddle music or Brahms' "Hungarian Dances".

Bowed instruments have been prominent in most cultures for thousands of years. Ever since the hunting bow was rubbed against a string or chord, music was transformed into something special. Called by many names: rebec, saraod, erhu kit, fiddle, viol, and the modern violin, almost every culture had one. The portable and versatile nature of bowed instruments traveled well and carried music from one culture to the next. In Europe, the violin was the premier solo instrument. Audiences mobbed theatres to see a great violinist perform, such as Nicolo Paganini, as they do today to see a pop star.

In early America, the violin played a significant role in spreading music. The violin was the first musical instrument (excluding the human voice) to play the blues. Folk music from such countries as Scotland, Ireland, Sweden, England, Germany, and Poland was brought to America by way of the violin (or fiddle) and then transformed into American country music with styles such as bluegrass, Cajun, Texas swing and Appalachian.

In Mexico, the violin was integral to the invention of Mariachi music. Charanga music, which is a creative mixture of Spanish and African music, utilized a violin section with cello. Later this string section was replaced with a horn section to produce a louder sound - needed for what was to become Salsa (Afro-Caribbean) music. The violin has been a part of jazz since its inception. As in Afro-Caribbean music, the violin was replaced by louder acoustic instrument except

for a few talented soloists. In order for the violin to have comparable volume with drums and other instruments associated with non-classical music, amplification became necessary. Jazz violinist Jean-Luc Ponty and rock violinist Jerry Goodman pioneered electric violin technology with its invention in the 1960's. As in the past, the violin remained a catalyst for new music.

Vocabulary

- Bodhran:** an Irish hand drum played with a stick or bone that looks like a large tambourine without cymbals
- Clave:** a five-note rhythm pattern over two measures, which is the glue that holds Afro-Caribbean music together; patterns are referred to as 3-2 or 2-3
- Claves:** two round, hardwood sticks that are often used to play the Clave in Afro-Caribbean music
- Dobro:** a guitar with a large metal cone set under its strings to produce a loud sound
- Fiddle:** the same as a violin, it usually associated with folk music; it is also used as a verb to describe folk violin playing
- Groove:** musicians use this word in many ways: as a noun, verb, adjective or adverb; all of the connotations are very positive, having to do with the musicians' good feelings about the playing and spontaneous interactions with each other in a musical session; the term is derived from the groove in a record.
- Improvisation:** in music, it means spontaneously creating music as it is performed
- Tabla:** a pair of East Indian hand drums played with the fingers; the right drum is a small wooden barrel drum, while the left drum is a slightly larger kettle shaped clay or copper drum
- Timbre:** (Pronounced - Tamber) the quality of sound associated with a musical instrument; even though two instruments (such as piano and violin) play the same note their timbre is different
- Upright or Double Bass:** acoustic bass played standing up that looks like a large violin