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Heritage Center Hosts SEASCAPE
Two day festival features music, storytelling, dance and art

SEASCAPE. The Gloucester Maritime Heritage Center is proud to present SEASCAPE on July 24th and 25th. This 2-day festival celebrates Gloucester's relationship with the sea through music, dance, storytelling and the visual arts. SEASCAPE is produced with grant funding from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Massachusetts Cultural Commission, and the McCarthy Family Foundation.

Beginning at 10 am on Saturday, a lively schedule of workshops and concerts will explore the cultural impact of Gloucester's distinction as the oldest seaport in America. Featured performers include David Coffin, story teller Jay O'Callahan, Sea Shanty singers The Johnson Girls, singer Ken Sweeney, and native American musician Strong Eagle Daly. The performers will conduct a series of 50-minute long concert/workshops on both Saturday and Sunday, providing the public with opportunities to learn from experienced performers.

Workshops are open to visitors of all ages, with the exception of the Saturday 11 a.m. workshop with Jay O'Callahan, which is limited to 25 participants 15 years old on up.

Throughout the day on Saturday, master batik artist Mary Edna Fraser will facilitate the making of a 3' x 10' community banner. Participants will draw in wax and paint with dyes on silk as they add to a banner which will serve as the backdrop for the Saturday evening concert. Younger children will use crayons and water colors to have a similar experience while creating projects to take home. On Sunday, all participants will make small pieces to take home.

On Saturday evening at 7 pm, all performers will gather for a three hour long concert under the Heritage Center's tent overlooking Gloucester Harbor. They will perform both individually and together, creating a lively night filled with music and stories. Students from the Cape Ann Center for Dance will perform a piece of choreography commissioned specifically for SEASCAPE, set to an arrangement by David Coffin of a popular "fishing" lullaby.

The festival continues on Sunday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. with a second series of concert/workshops. There will also be a 3 p.m. concert bringing together all participating musicians in one long collaborative set.

Children's activities and refreshments will be available throughout both days of the festival.

All of the daytime concert/workshops are free of charge. The same goes for the Sunday finale concert. Tickets to the Saturday night concert are \$15 (\$7 for kids 14 and under) and are available at the Heritage Center, in advance and at the door.

The Performers

David Coffin has performed throughout New England for the past thirty years. While his venues include concert halls, festivals, coffeehouses, and museums; he is most often found

performing one of his two school enrichment programs throughout New England. He has also performed with the Cambridge-based Revels since 1980 as a singer, instrumentalist and, since 1991, as Master of Ceremonies.

At the heart of David's work is traditional and contemporary folk music, including an extensive collection of songs from the Maritime tradition. Widely known for his rich baritone voice, his impressive collection of musical instruments includes concertinas, recorders, penny-whistles, bombardards (loud Breton double reeds), gemshorns, cornamuse, shawms, and rauschpfeiffes.

Jay O'Callahan is one of the world's best-known storytellers. He has performed at Lincoln Center, at the Abbey Theatre in Dublin and other theatres around the world, at the Olympics, and with the Boston Symphony Orchestra. His work appears regularly on National Public Radio. In addition to creating and performing stories, he leads workshops on storytelling and writing.

Jay was commissioned by NASA to create a story in celebration of the agency's 50th anniversary in 2008. The National Association of Independent Record Distributors and Manufacturers awarded first prize to the High Windy recording of his story, "The Boy Who Loved Frogs."

The Johnson Girls is an energetic all-woman mostly a cappella group performing folk music with an emphasis on songs of the sea and shore. Each member (Joy Bennet, Alison Kelley, Bonnie Milner, and Deirdra Murtha) of the group brings a specialty and style to the ensemble. The Johnson Girls' extensive repertoire of both traditional and contemporary music includes songs with an Afro-Caribbean influence, of the inland waterways, of fishing, mining, Irish, Anglo-American, Italian and French Canadian ballads and work songs, and much more. With a sound that has been called "exciting", "haunting", "uplifting", and "full of harmony", the Johnson Girls give "hair-raising" performances of powerhouse chanteys, tender ballads and just plain fun songs, bringing audiences to their feet wherever they go.

Ken Sweeney performs mountain ballads, old time songs and sea music. A top notch player of the clawhammer banjo, English concertina, and harmonica, he also makes music playing spoons. He is a former member of the infamous Mystic Seaport Chanteymen.

Strong Eagle Daly, of the Nipmuc nation, handcrafts the flutes he plays. Each of Daly's flutes contain a hand carved animal which faces the performer. He says that "in addition to the animals, the spirit of tree resonates through the flute as I breathe new life through it and give it a new voice." Through Daly's observation of different flute players and their varying techniques, he has created his own improvisational style and voice. He fills empty space with the haunting and inspirational sounds that come from the various woods and octaves of his flute.

Mary Edna Fraser is an internationally known textile artist who collaborates with scientists from a variety of disciplines to illustrate the changing environment. She researches her landscapes by hiking the terrain, exploring the waterways by boat, and by taking aerial photos from the open cockpit of her grandfather's 1946 Ercoupe plane. She also uses satellite images and maps to plan her expansive compositions, which take the form of huge batiks. In 1994, she was the first woman to be honored with a one person textile exhibition at the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum in Washington, D.C.

Mary Edna's work has been included in exhibits at many museums and organizations including the National Academy of Sciences, the New England Aquarium, Mystic Seaport , North Carolina Maritime Museum, and the Duke University Museum of Art.