

The Abaca String Band

The ***Abaca String Band*** was founded by guitarist Andrew Schulman. This unique group, consisting of *8-string Guitar, Mandolin, Violin, Viola, and Double Bass*, began in 1991 by performing for membership events at the *Metropolitan Museum of Art* in New York. They have appeared as featured artists on the *Carnegie Hall Neighborhood Concert Series* since 1995. The Abaca String Band tours throughout the United States and has been presented in concert in *Lincoln Center, the Newport Music Festival, Chautauqua Institution, Troy Music Hall, and the Levitt Pavilion* among many others. They have performed for special events at *The White House, the Library of Congress* and many others. Their debut CD, "*Live From Chautauqua*", was broadcast nationwide by *Public Radio International* during July '99, and "*Live From Chautauqua, Vol. II*", was also nationally broadcast by *PRI*, in July '04.

The ***Abaca String Band***, made up of the three types of stringed instruments (plucked, bowed, and plectrum) has been the string group chosen by the Carnegie Hall Education Department since 1996 for workshops and lecture/demonstrations in the New York City public schools.

Andrew Schulman (Eight-String Guitar, Concert M.C., Education Program Moderator), is the founder and music director of the Abaca String Band. As a soloist he has concertized throughout the United States and Europe in appearances ranging from the *Royal Albert Hall* in London, to the *Improv* in New York, and has made numerous radio appearances. He performed for the *Christmas Candlelight Tour* at The White House December '99. Mr. Schulman appears every Sunday at the

Palm Court at the Plaza Hotel in New York City. His CDs, '*The Baroque Style*', and '*Lullabies, Reveilles, (and Siesta!)*', were recorded on the *Centaur* label, and have received popular and critical acclaim.

ABACA STRING BAND: INSTRUMENTATION

8-string *Guitar, Mandolin, Violin, Viola, Double Bass*

Each of the instruments in the group take turns in the role of:

A - Soloist

B - Ensemble featured player (more than one soloist in the piece)

C - Accompanist

The Guitar - The guitar is the oldest type of stringed instrument, plucked string. The player's right hand fingers "pluck" the strings, pulling or pushing them with the fingertips, to set the string in motion, which causes the vibrations (good vibrations!), which creates the interaction of string, wood, and air, to make sound. Examples of early guitars date back to ancient Persia, ca. 2500 B.C.

The Violin, Viola, and Double Bass - these three instruments are members of the Violin family. They are part of the next development in the string instrument family, bowed string. Instead of the hands plucking the string, a bow, derived from the bow and arrow, is drawn across the strings creating sound. The bow, a long thin stick with horsehair stretched from one end to the other, allows for long sustained tones to be produced.

The Mandolin - The final development in the string family is the "plectrum" instruments like the Mandolin (also sometimes used for the *Guitar*). The plectrum, also called a "pick", was originally made from tortoise shell; today it is often made from plastic

though various materials are used. It allows for the rapidly repeated notes that are often used in mandolin playing.

TYPICAL ABACA STRING BAND TOURING CONCERT PROGRAM:

THE ABACA STRING BAND

Concerto in G Major, Op. 3 #3.....Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741)

for Guitar and Strings

Allegro

Largo

Allegro

Music For The Royal Fireworks.....George Frideric Handel (1685-1759)

for Violin and Strings

Bourree

La Paix

La Rejouissance

Bachianas Brasileiras #5.....Heitor Villa-Lobos (1887-1959)

Aria-Cantilena

for Violin, Viola and Strings

Grave and Fandango.....Luigi Boccherini (1743-1805)

from Guitar Quintet #4 in D Major

Csardas...Vittorio Monti.....(1868-1922)

(arr. Anatoly Trofimov & Andrew Schulman)

for Mandolin, Guitar, and Strings

Largo-Allegro

Embraceable You.....George Gershwin (1898-1937)

Summertime

I Got Plenty O' Nuttin'

Andrew Schulman, Eight-String Guitar

Country Club..... Scott Joplin (1868-1917)

Maple Leaf Rag

for Mandolin, Violin, and Strings

Ol' Man River.....Jerome Kern (1885-1945)

for Double Bass and Strings

Take The A Train.....Billy Strayhorn (1915-1967)

Satin Doll.....Edward Kennedy "Duke" Ellington (1899-1974)

Don't Get Around Much Anymore...

It Don't Mean A Thing (If It Ain't Got That Swing)

Music arranged by Andrew Schulman

ABACA STRING BAND EDUCATION PROGRAMS:

THE WORLD OF MUSIC

Age Group: All Programs are adapted to fit the age group, we have performed for an audience of 3-year olds (really!) all the way up to college level.

Length: 50-90 minutes (length determined by school needs)

Overview:

An interactive program to introduce young people to music. The quintet will perform musical excerpts to demonstrate melody, harmony, rhythm, tempo, timbre, and other basic fundamentals of music. The concept will be to take a familiar tune such as "Over

the Rainbow" and show how each element is a vital part in making music. In addition, the clinic will include a musical journey of styles, for example; Bach's "Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring", Mozart's "Rondo alla Turca", Joplin's "Maple Leaf Rag", Ellington's "It Don't Mean A Thing (If It Ain't Got That Swing)", and The Who's "Pinball Wizard".

INTRODUCTION TO STRINGED INSTRUMENTS

Length: 50-90 minutes (length determined by school needs)

Overview:

A program introducing the three types of stringed instruments; plucked (guitar), bowed (violin, viola, double bass) and plectrum (mandolin). A mix of contrasting selections show each instrument's versatility of timbre, style and technique. The program also includes discussion and demonstration of basic acoustic principles, further discussion of the stringed instruments family, and historical development. Vivaldi's "Guitar Concerto", Villa-Lobos' "Bachianas Brasileiras #5", Monti's "Csardas" and Kern's "Ol' Man River" are just a few possible examples.

About the Composers:

Vivaldi was the first master of classical string music; he lived in the early 1700's. This Concerto is considered one of the models of the Italian String Concerto. The Guitar is the featured soloist here.

Villa-Lobos was a prolific Brazilian composer of the mid-20th century who wrote for every combination of instrument, especially the guitar. The "Bachianas Brasileiras #5" is his most famous piece; in this arrangement the Violin and Viola are featured.

Vittorio Monti's "Csardas" is Hungarian gypsy music written in the late 1800's, although the composer was an Italian! Originally written for Mandolin and Guitar, this arrangement also includes the other string instruments in the group.

Jerome Kern was an American composer of Broadway musicals. Composed in 1927, 'Ol Man River', from "Showboat", was sung by a bass singer, and is performed here in a version with the Double Bass playing the melody.

IN CONCERT

Age Group: NON-MUSIC HIGH SCHOOL, MUSIC STUDENTS

Length: 55 minutes

Overview:

A formal concert presentation similar to those presented by the Abaca String Band at concert halls. This program includes a lively discussion regarding concert etiquette that is intended to educate as well as entertain. Examples include the wide diversity of the group's programming, ranging from Baroque string concertos to Sixtie's Rock!