

Students open musical doors



SHAWN DOWD staff photographer

Second-grader Jah'ciance Ramsey plugs his ears against the piercing sound of a clarinet, above, as Eastman School of Music students visit Rochester's School 16. Jenni Guhl, right, performed as a bee with The Reverie Winds quartet. The Eastman School is sending nearly 50 chamber groups into the community during the next two weeks.

Eastman School takes classical pieces beyond the concert hall

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Rochester School 16 students bobbed along to music — classical music — during performances by Eastman School of Music students Tuesday.

Summer Brumfield, a fifth-grader who listens to gospel and rap at home, said she really liked the classical pieces the string quartet played.

"I liked the way they were moving," said Jeremiah Barley, 10. As the four Eastman students played, they swayed with the music.

"Sometimes when you listen to music, you dance and you don't even realize it," explained Kitty Cheung, 21, a violinist.

School 16 students weren't the only ones to hear woodwind, string and horn performances Tuesday. The Eastman School celebrated the 10th anniversary of its Music for All program, designed to take classical music out of the concert hall and into the community,

by sending almost 50 student chamber groups into 19 elementary, middle and high schools in the Rochester area.

For the next two weeks, the chamber groups will perform in bookstores, libraries and nursing homes throughout the community.

"They're really going out as ambassadors for classical music," said Elinor Freer, coordinator of Music for All and assistant professor of chamber music at the Eastman School.

The program is a two-way street. The Eastman students — many of whom hail from other parts of the country or from abroad — get exposed to parts of the Rochester area they might not otherwise see.

The string quartet that played for School 16 fifth-graders has members from Singapore, Hong Kong, South Africa and Baltimore. The quartet chose to participate this year even though it wasn't technically part of the program.



"We really enjoyed ourselves when we did it last year, so we wanted to do it again," said Grace Lee, a violinist.

The Eastman students called teachers ahead of time to make sure that what the students planned to talk about would fit into what the children were already learning.

Lee's group, which calls itself

the Matryoshka Quartet after the Russian nesting dolls, brought a doll with members' faces painted on it to show the students and explain why the group named itself after the doll.

"Just like the matryoshka dolls, our instruments are different in size but similar in shape," Lee told the children. □

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