

The new ambassadors

Young Eastman musicians are fanning out to perform

JOHN PITCHER

STAFF MUSIC CRITIC

These days, classical music can use all the help it can get.

Audiences are getting smaller and grayer, arts funding is being decimated and serious music has all but disappeared from television (sorry, but Andrea Bocelli's insufferable opera-like caterwauling during interminable PBS fundraisers does *not* count as classical music).

NASCAR is everywhere, and the barbarians are at the gates. It seems all is lost. Yet just when you think art is about to sink forever in a new cultural Dark Age, along come 170 bright-eyed and enthusiastic Eastman School of Music students to help turn the Philistine tide.

This week and next, Eastman's young musicians, who are all in their late teens and early 20s, will be fanning out into the community, playing classical music in schools, colleges, libraries, bookstores, hospitals, churches and senior centers.

Their performances, part of an ongoing Eastman outreach effort called Music For All, are intended to develop new audiences for classical music.

The appearances are also intended to help teach Eastman's young musicians how to talk about the music they play. With luck, many of those students will become 21st-century Leonard Bernsteins, arts leaders who will be articulate spokesmen for classical music in a new age dominated by pop culture.

"In the future, all classical musicians are going to have to be ambassadors for music," says James Under-

coffer, Eastman's dean.

Not surprisingly, Eastman has found that classical diplomacy works best when directed at young children, who have not yet picked up on the long-standing American tradition of reverse snobbery, which holds that anything that smacks of European high culture is inherently and necessarily bad.

Elementary schools, therefore, are an important target of Eastman's outreach.

"It's a challenge at first finding ways to interest third-graders, but they always end up loving the music," says Juliet Grabowski, 23, a clarinetist and Eastman graduate who spent several years in Music For All. "I found a way to make my clarinet sound like a light saber from *Star Wars*, and the kids were totally won over."

"Once you're in the community and you realize you're inspiring people, the feeling you get is awesome," says Kristin Rarick, 21, an Eastman junior and saxophonist with the Vim Saxophone Quartet.

Eastman students are required to give two outreach concerts, one for kids and another for adults. The following adult concerts are all free and open to the public.

Guitar Trio: 7 p.m. Tuesday, Brighton Library, 2300 Elmwood Ave., (585) 784-5300.

Klenke Winds with harpist Liz Munch: 1 p.m. Saturday, Central Library of Rochester and Monroe County, 115 South Ave., (585) 428-7300.

String Trio: 7:30 p.m. Saturday, St. Luke's Episcopal Church of Fairport, 77 Country Lane, Fairport, (585) 223-2796.

Wind Quintet: 4 p.m. next Sunday,



Scottsville Free Library, 28 Main St. Scottsville, (585) 889-2023.

Piano Duo: 12 p.m. April 4, Downtown United Presbyterian Church, 1 N. Fitzhugh St., (585) 325-4000, ext.

The Cape Cod Experiment (a string quartet): 7 p.m. April 4, Brig-

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ANNETTE LEIN staff photographer
Imani Celestine, a Rochester fourth-
visit to the school Tuesday by The
lesson to Imani is Emily Wozniak of
ving concerts at area schools.

JAMIE GERMANO staff photographer
Kristin Rarick, above, of the Vim
Saxophone Quartet, answers
questions during a performance at
School of the Arts. Below, from left,
Dimitrios Kostaras, Mike Matlock,
Rarick and Rich Miserendino perform.

Elmwood Ave., (585)

Quintet: 7 p.m.
Noble Booksellers,
Pittsford, (585)