

# SOUND-OFF

Quarterly news from *Education Through Music*

## 2015 Children's Benefit Gala Highlights ETM Students' Performances

ETM's signature fundraiser, the annual Children's Benefit Gala, was held Monday, June 8, 2015 at Capitale in Manhattan. The long-anticipated event brought a new level of awareness to all of the good work that ETM has done and continues to do in NYC schools. The Gala was co-hosted by actress Christine Baranski from *The Good Wife* and Darren Criss, the star of the Tony award-winning musical *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*, and over three

hundred guests were in attendance.

The highlight of the Gala was the musical performances by ETM students who captivated the guests with their energy and talent. The evening started with a carefully executed performance of "Dry Your Tears, Africa" conducted by ETM's Director of Program Peter Pauliks. It was also a special moment when the students performed a new song, commissioned by ETM from composer Jim

Papoulis, "Music Makes Me." The song is inspired by ETM's mission to use music as a catalyst to help children succeed in school and life in general. What better way to validate all of the work ETM has done than to see the students perform live on stage!

For the final performance the students were joined by the singer, songwriter and pianist, Peter Cincotti. Their powerful performance of "Heart of the City" brought tears to the eyes

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Students perform "Heart of the City" with Peter Cincotti.



Composer Jim Papoulis talks about his new song, "Music Makes Me," that premiered at the 2015 ETM Children's Benefit Gala.

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# 2015 ETM Gala

*Continued from front page*

of many and it left a deep impression on the guests and ETM staff alike. The musical part of the evening was concluded with Peter's solo performance.

The Gala honored a long-time friend and supporter, Katherine D. Elliott. Mrs. Elliott has been on ETM's board for over fifteen years and her time and dedication has been invaluable. Mrs. Elliott was presented with a special gift by Paris, a student at PS 76, who thanked Elliott on behalf of all of the students for everything she has done to make music education a reality for the kids.

The importance of music education and the impact it has on transforming children's lives is hard to underestimate. This sentiment was powerfully reinforced by Christine Baranski as she stood on stage at the beginning of the live auction. "I am a grandmother now. And it means that now even more than ever I feel the need to ensure that all kids have access to music education because it really does change lives. I hope you

join me in supporting this cause," said Baranski as she generously donated a one-of-a-kind experience to ETM's auction – lunch with the famed actress and a behind the scenes tour on the set of *The Good Wife*. The live auction, led by the charming Alexander Berggruen from Christie's, also included two other unique live experiences: an opportunity to see Darren Criss perform as well as meet him after the show and a chance to see Josh Groban play live and meet him backstage, and a trip to Napa Valley. 🍷

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## ETM Festival Expands to Lehman College's Center for the Performing Arts



*Teacher Leah Potteiger directs orchestra students from ETM Bronx partner school MS 180.*

Education Through Music held its third annual Music Festival at Lehman College's Center for the Performing Arts in the Bronx on June 3, 2015. The new venue provided the perfect space to showcase ETM partner schools' bands and orchestras. This year the festival brought together nearly 900 students who have participated in ETM's music programs over the course of the school year. The festival is the final celebration of students' hard work and musical accomplishments. The students, some of whom just started learning an instrument in the fall, performed for their family, friends and the larger community present at the event.

New York City Council Member Andy King of the 12th District attended the festival and watched hundreds of students from his district perform. ETM has built strong ensemble programs at partner schools within Councilman King's district: P.S. 76, P.S. 103 and M.S. 180 have band programs and P.S. 68, P.S. 87, P.S. 169, M.S. 180 and M.S. 529 have string orchestras. Council Member King has been a strong supporter of both ETM's general music and ensemble programs, and he helped Peter Pauliks, ETM's Director of Programs, to kick off the show to loud cheers of excitement from the crowd. In his

opening remarks, King reemphasized the importance of music education in motivation for and success in school, and commended the students for their hard work and achievements.

The three-hour long music marathon kept the audience completely captivated and the students watched their peers perform with enthusiasm. The opportunity to perform on stage in front of hundreds of people can be seen as a reward in itself, but at the end of festival each student also received a medal to reward them for their hard work and dedication and each teacher was awarded a trophy that will be displayed in the classroom to inspire the students.

ETM has built ensembles at 18 of its partner schools, offering interested students the opportunity to learn the joys of playing an instrument, while also learning cooperation, discipline, and responsibility. "Children who have studied all year long are coming together and showing what they have learned," said Katherine Damkohler, executive director of Education Through Music. "It's a great day for the schools and a great way to celebrate music education. These students exemplify what is possible through hard work, dedication and a long-term partnership with ETM." 📖



*New York City Council Member Andy King helped open the 2015 ETM Festival.*



*Nearly 900 students performed at the Festival.  
Photos by Anna Yatskevich*

## ETM Welcomes New Board Member

ETM welcomes Matthew F. Knouff to the Board of Directors. Knouff is eDiscovery Counsel with Complete Discovery Source, Inc. (CDS), a global electronic discovery services provider and technology developer. Knouff is a lifelong musician, entrepreneur, and advocate for empowerment. He founded the internationally distributed record label Venge Records in 1999. He is a graduate of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and the University of North Carolina School of Law, and lives with his wife in Brooklyn, NY. 📖



# 2015 ETM Children's Benefit Gala



*ETM Board Member Richard Bernstein served as emcee of the 2015 ETM Children's Benefit Gala.*



*ETM band students performed at the 2015 ETM Children's Benefit Gala.*



*Christie's auctioneer Alexander Berggruen auctions off lunch with Christine Baranski and a set visit to The Good Wife.*



*ETM partner school students showcased their musical abilities at the 2015 ETM Children's Benefit Gala.*



*The evening featured a special tribute to ETM Board Member Katherine Elliott.*



*Paris, a student who has received music as part of the ETM program at her school, talks about how music has made a difference at her school.*







*ETM students perform "Dry Your Tears, Afrika."*



*ETM Board Member Aidan Fitzmaurice and his wife, Edwina Fitzmaurice.*



*ETM Chairman Michael Schaefer.*



*ETM students perform with Peter Cincotti..*



*ETM supporter Richard Abramson.*



*An ETM partner school student performs.*

## ETM Bronx Partner School PS 169 Celebrates Cultural Exchange with Swiss Music Class

Education Through Music (ETM) students at PS 169 in the Bronx and students from Zürich's Sihlfeld school participated in a music and cultural exchange program attended by Ambassador André Schaller, Consul General of Switzerland in New York.

"We are very happy to support this innovative, state-of-the-art musical exchange between American and Swiss students. It's wonderful for me to see children from both sides of the Atlantic come together in such an inspiring way," said Ambassador Schaller.

The students performed for each other via Skype, followed by a question and answer session about school life, hobbies and experiences living in Zürich and New York. Members of the Swiss Consulate's Culture and Education Department, Thomas Schneider, Swiss Head of Culture and Education, and Sandrine Ligabue, Deputy Head of Culture and Education, facilitated the exchange by translating the discussion in Swiss German and English.

"We are thrilled that Education Through Music students and students in Switzerland are coming together to share their mutual love of music," said Katherine Damkohler, Executive Director of Education Through Music. "The universal language of music is a powerful unifier for these children to gain a better understanding of their different cultures and school experiences. We are especially grateful to Ambassador Schaller for his support in this unique music exchange."

"As a former ETM music teacher and now a music instructor at Musikschule Konservatorium Zürich and the Sihlfeld school, I have seen firsthand the importance music education has in enriching the lives of students around the world," said Sharon Kim Soldati, orchestra teacher with the Sihlfeld Primarschule in Zürich. 🎵



*PS 169 Music Teacher Amanda Gonzalez conducts students as they play for Swiss students during the cultural exchange.*



*Ambassador André Schaller, Consul General of Switzerland in New York, addresses students at PS 169 in the Bronx, with students from Zurich participating via Skype.*



*Students from PS 169 received red baseball caps from the Swiss Consulate. Photos by Anna Yatskevich*

## Check out ETM's Latest Evaluation Report

ETM's annual evaluation report has been released. The report is an overview of how the Education Through Music (ETM) program impacted the students and schools being served during the 2013-2014 school year. The findings are based on impact evaluation data collected by ETM, and focus on how the program contributed to students' academic achievement and general development. The findings also address how the program was perceived by its partner school communities. **Visit [www.ETMonline.org/evaluation](http://www.ETMonline.org/evaluation) to read the report.**



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