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"Inviting Invention"

Performance Exploration Series

A six-week series of performance explorations with performer/composer Deborah Henson-Conant and special guests from diverse fields, ranging from music to philosophy.

Inviting Invention A Performance Exploration Series

WHO: Performer/Composer Deborah Henson-Conant and Special Guests

WHAT: Inviting Invention – A Performance Exploration Series at the Regent Theatre
Collaborative Explorations crossing Styles, Genres and Disciplines

WHEN: Tuesday Evenings at 7:30, Sept. 19 thru Oct. 24, 2006

WHERE: Regent Theatre - 7 Medford St - Arlington Center

PRICE: All tickets \$8

BUY TIX: www.RegentTheatre.com / 781-646-4849 / Box Office - 7 Medford St - Arlington

WHAT IS IT? Weekly performance exploration series with performer/composer Deborah Henson-Conant and special guests from the fields of music, theater, dance, science, philosophy, writing, poetry, sports, medicine, journalism ... and everything else!

The show combines performance, interview, and collaboration between host Deborah Henson-Conant and guests. Through the creative exploration of diverse minds, the audience is invited into the worlds of INVENTION (individual creativity) and ALCHEMY (creative minds exploring together). Example: How is being a nuclear physicist *like* being a musician, and *how can the two possibly create something together* — right now — in front of an audience?

FOR MORE INFO about the series or DHC: www.HipHarp.com or www.InventionAndAlchemy.com

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Why is this Series being Developed?

Composer/Performer Deborah Henson-Conant and Producer Jonathan Wyner spent the last two years completely immersed in a project that had to be perfect. "We were given a major private grant to produce a broadcast-quality DVD of my original music with full symphony orchestra," says Henson-Conant. "The chance to create a DVD of my own work at the highest level of professional production was a dream come true, but it was also extremely stressful. Everything had to be perfect. We had a huge film crew, high-definition film equipment, an orchestra of 80 musicians. We were working with an Emmy-Award-Winning director, a Grammy-Winning engineer, one of the most creative conductors in the US. Everything was riding on our work."

"It was the single most intense two years of my life. I needed something to refill my creative well. So Jonathan and I decided to try out an idea I'd had several years ago: a performance series that allows us to explore creative collaboration with diverse guests – not just other musicians, but dancers, journalists, actors and eventually even scientists, doctors."

"We envisioned the 'Inviting Invention' Exploration Series as an opportunity to allow diverse creative minds a chance to invent something new and imperfect in front of a live audience, yet within the safety net of exploration. Emphasis on the idea of 'imperfect' and on the spirit of experimentation and collaboration. It also gives me a chance to simply 'play' on stage with people I've wanted to work with for years – and after the intensity of the last two years, I just really need to play – in every sense of the word!"

"The series so far has been great fun," says producer and moderator Jonathan Wyner. "In the first half of each show, Henson-Conant and her guest present their solo work. In the second half, they embark on a collaborative experiment. If time permits, the audience is invited for a Q & A. It has given audiences a chance to interact with Deborah and her guests in a way that just isn't possible with audiences of 2000, like we had when we filmed the DVD. We're also video-taping each show with the thought of podcasting it later on, and eventually using it as a demo or pilot for a longer ongoing series."

Deborah Henson-Conant – Brief Bio

"...reshaping the serenely Olympian harp into a jazz instrument by warping it closer to the blues"
New York Times

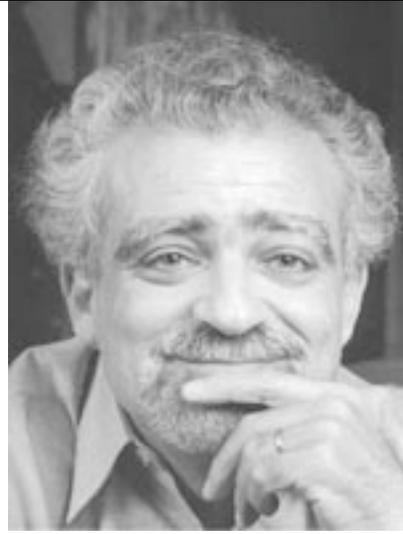
Deborah Henson-Conant is known for her renegade performances that mix theatre, music and humor, and for revolutionizing the elite concert harp into an electric strap-on 31-string hybrid she plays in genres from blues to flamenco. See week 5 for a full bio of Deborah Henson-Conant.

Jonathan Wyner, Producer/Moderator – Brief Bio

Producer, mastering engineer, performer and coach, Wyner has mastered more than 4000 CD's during the last 21 years spanning every musical genre from Opera to HipHop. His credits range from the extremely well known (James Taylor, David Bowie, Aerosmith, Kiri Te Kanawa) to the more idiosyncratic and independent artists/labels. He produced Henson-Conant's recent "Invention & Alchemy" DVD. (www.M-Works.com)

**See Page 3 thru 7 for Guest Bios • Upcoming Guests at HipHarp.com Tour Schedule
More info: www.HipHarp.com or email info@HipHarp.com / phone 781-483-3556**

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Inviting Invention- Week 2: "Morning Stories Faces the Music"

Guest Bio: Tony Kahn

An award-winning radio host and producer, Tony Kahn is currently the producer/director of WGBH Radio's *Morning Stories* program, public radio's first podcast.

Tony Kahn joins "Inviting Invention" for the second of six shows in a series of weekly Performance Explorations at :

**The Regent Theatre
Tue. Sept. 26th at 7:30 pm.**

Kahn has written, produced, narrated and hosted more than 50 radio and television programs and series for the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS), National Public Radio (NPR), Nickelodeon, A&E, Monitor Radio, and Boston television stations WGBH and WCVB. In addition to having served as the original host of PRI's *The World*—public radio's global news program—Kahn is a regular panelist on WGBH/NPR's weekly witty word game show, *Says You!* He has also been a regular commentator for Public Radio International's *Marketplace* and NPR's *Morning Edition*.

Kahn's broadcast work has received 12 New England Emmys, a National Emmy nomination, the Edward R. Murrow Award for Feature Reporting, six Gold Medals of the New York International Festival, three Gabriel Awards, an Ohio State Award, the A.I.R. Radio Award for Radio Interviewing, and the Grand Award for Radio Drama from the New York International Festival. Several of his documentaries have been screened at film festivals throughout the US; other works, including three plays and five screenplays, have received notable recognition. Kahn's acclaimed public radio series, *Blacklisted*, starring Ron Leibman, Eli Wallach, Stockard Channing chronicled the experiences of his father, Hollywood screenwriter Gordon Kahn, who was blacklisted during the McCarthy era.

Most recently, Kahn has been recognized as one of the "Twelve Pioneers of Podcasting" for placing public radio in the vanguard of the new media revolution with the 2004 launch of his *Morning Stories* podcast—public radio's first podcast. Since its debut, *Morning Stories* has built a world wide audience and is heard regularly in over 150 countries.

Prior to his work in broadcasting, Kahn was a Russian scholar and translator and published four books of translations of Russian poetry, biography and fiction. He graduated Magna cum Laude and Phi Beta Kappa from Harvard University and holds a Master's Degree in Slavic Studies from Columbia University.

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Inviting Invention - Week 3: "True Story Meets Pure Invention"

Guest Bio: True Story Theatre

A nonprofit ensemble based in the Boston area, the "True Story" troupe uses improvisational theater for community development and social healing.

True Story Theatre joins "Inviting Invention" host Deborah Henson-Conant for the third show in a series of weekly Performance Explorations:

**Tue. Oct. 3rd at 7:30 pm
The Regent Theatre**

For ticket & other info, see pg. 1

True Story theater is one of several dozen "Playback Theatre" Troupes in the US. Each Playback Troupe has their own style and their own name, but all follow basic principles developed 30 years ago by the founders of "Playback Theatre" in New Paltz New York. These principles come out of drama therapy, but are used by "Playback" companies not only to heal individuals but to strengthen and create dialog in communities.

The Boston Area's "True Story Theatre" was founded by Christopher Ellinger in 1991, and grew out of his frustration with standard meeting styles. He discovered that the drama and insight of "Playback Theater" could often provide more engaging and productive ways to encourage group conversation. He called his troupe "True Story Theater" to highlight the troupe's belief that each person has special stories to tell and his conviction that our true stories are as compelling and often more meaningful than anything a storyteller is likely to make up.

Members of "True Story" have varied backgrounds, from professional artists to drama therapist, corporate coaches, drama teachers, yoga teachers, university professors and professional musicians. They're each drawn to the "Playback" style of theatre in part because of the creative collaboration and in part because it allows them to serve the diverse communities in which they present their events.

"True Story" performs and offers training locally and nationally. They have worked with teen leaders, ex-prisoners, hospices, churches, federal employees, businesses, philanthropists as well as engaging in performance events with the general public.

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Inviting Invention - Week 4: "Leaps of Faith"

Guest Bio:
Karen Montanaro, Mime Dancer

A professional ballet dancer and mime artist, Karen Montanaro travels the world performing her one-woman show and teaching her approach to movement "to anyone who wants to learn."

Karen Montanaro joins "Inviting Invention" host Deborah Henson-Conant for the fourth in a series of weekly Performance Explorations:

Tue. Oct. 10 at 7:30 pm
Regent Theatre • Arlington, MA

For ticket & other info, see pg. 1

Karen Montanaro calls her art form "Mime Dance," a name that reflects her life experience:

Karen was a professional ballet dancer (Ohio Ballet and Darmstadt Opera Ballet in Germany) for 10 years before her life took an unprecedented turn. In 1987, Karen saw a man named Tony Montanaro perform for the first time and knew her life would never be the same. Tony was not only the best mime she had ever seen, but also the most dynamic performer. What's more, Tony had an international reputation as a teacher of mime and personal style theater. His mime dispensed with the stereotypical whiteface and silence, and went to the core of physical theater: the art of physicalizing character, story and emotion.

Karen decided then and there to devote herself to learning everything Tony had to teach her. Thus began a magical partnership that would ultimately bring two classical art forms (mime and ballet) together into "Mime Dance."

Karen and Tony's learning partnership also began a life partnership. They were married in 1989 and spent a dozen years performing, teaching and exploring performance together until Tony's death in 2002. Since then, Karen has been touring her solo show worldwide and teaching the Montanaro Method to children and adults of all ages. Her teaching includes a residency entitled "Imagination in Motion" for public and private school and a summer intensive with director/performer Leland Faulkner (another former Montanaro student) at the Celebration Barn in South Paris, Maine. Faulkner, Montanaro and other students of the Montanaro Method have just released a documentary chronicling Tony's life and work, called "Theatre and Inspiration."

www.mimedance.com <<http://www.mimedance.com>>
www.celebrationbarn.com <<http://www.celebrationbarn.com>>

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Inviting Invention - Week 5: "Invention & Re-Invention"

Guest Bio:
**Deborah Henson-Conant,
Composer/Performer**

"Invention & Reinvention"

**Tue. Oct. 17 at 7:30 pm
Regent Thtr • Arlington, MA**

For ticket & other info, see pg. 1

DEBORAH HENSON-CONANT, composer/performer

Deborah Henson-Conant is known for her renegade performances that mix theatre, music and humor, and for revolutionizing the elite concert harp into an electric strap-on 31-string hybrid she plays in genres from blues to flamenco. She's toured as a soloist with the Boston Pops, opened for Ray Charles at Tanglewood, premiered her compositions with symphonies throughout the US, lectured at the Paris Conservatory, gotten rave reviews for her one-woman show at the Edinburgh Fringe, and received grants from the NEA and "Meet the Composer". She's been featured on NBC, CBS, CNN, and PBS. Her recently released DVD, "Invention & Alchemy," features her one-woman show with 80-piece orchestra. (www.HipHarp.com)

THIS WEEK'S SHOW: Henson-Conant has reinvented herself repeatedly, turning the concert harp into a jazz instrument, landing a record contract with major jazz label; then writing her original music for symphony orchestra, premiering it with the Boston Pops, then touring it to symphonies around the US, receiving a major private grant to film her show for national release.

Why the constant reinvention? "Some people are born clearly seeing what they want to do, knowing its name. If you want to be the greatest ball-player, or the greatest cellist, you have role models to follow, statistic to challenge, awards to win. What if the thing you want to be great at doesn't even exist yet? What if you have to invent it, and reinvent it - sensing it's there, but never knowing exactly what it is until you've created it yourself? That's my life."

For more info visit www.HipHarp.com or contact: info@HipHarp.com / 781-483-3556

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Inviting Invention - Week 6: "Exploding String Theory"

Guest Bio:

**Eugene Friesen,
Performer/Composer/Cellist**

Eugene Friesen joins "Inviting Invention" host Deborah Henson-Conant for the sixth in a series of weekly Performance Explorations:

**Tue. Oct. 24 at 7:30 pm
Regent Thtr • Arlington, MA**

For ticket & other info, see pg. 1

EUGENE FRIESEN, performing artist/composer

Eugene Friesen is at the forefront of a new generation of musicians versed in classical, popular and world music. A graduate of the Yale School of Music, he is active as a performer, composer, teacher and recording artist.

Friesen's gift for the responsive flow of improvisatory music has been featured in concerts all over the world with the [Paul Winter Consort](#), Trio Globo, and with poets Yevgeny Yevtushenko and Coleman Barks. He has performed as a soloist at the International Cello Festival in Manchester, England; Rencontres d'Ensembles de Violoncelles in Beauvais, France; and at the World Cello Congress in Baltimore, Maryland.

His compositional credits include four albums of original music: In The Shade Of Angels, New Friend, Arms Around You and The Song of Rivers; Grasslands, a symphony premiered on the Kansas prairie in 1997; Earth Requiem: Stories of Hope, an oratorio first performed in 1991; The Brementown Musicians with Bob Hoskins for Rabbit Ears Productions in 1992; Sabbaths, settings of poems by Wendell Berry premiered in Vermont in 1999; and numerous scores for documentary films. Eugene's music can also be heard on the recordings of Trio Globo, which he founded in 1992 with Howard Levy and Glen Velez.

Friesen was awarded a Grammy award as a member of the [Paul Winter Consort](#) for the 1994 album Spanish Angel and was the 1999 recipient of grants from the Lila Wallace/Reader's Digest Fund and Continental Harmony to compose a symphonic setting of Carl Sandburg's PRAIRIE, which was premiered in June of 2001 in Arkansas City, Kansas.

CelloMan, his one-man show for young audiences, features a wide variety of music on solo cello: classical, jazz, blues and rock. Created in collaboration with maskmaker/choreographer Robert Faust, CelloMan has been performed widely in the United States. The CelloMan video was released in 1999.

Eugene Friesen is on the faculty of the Berklee College of Music in Boston. He lives in Vermont with his wife, Wendy, and children.

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