

## SAM'S STORY



*Music That Heals* is a performance program, hosted by HAI, started by musicians Kathy Lord and Susan Weber in 1997. One aspect of this program is designed to bring live musical performances to the bedsides of seriously ill children in hospitals.

With a guitar and some hand percussion, Susan and I were strolling from room to room in the pediatric intensive care unit at a hospital in Brooklyn, offering a song or two to the patients and their families. Then we came to the room of a three month old boy named Sam. As we were singing, Sam raised his right arm in the air and started to sway. He was staring at us intently. When his mother came into the room and saw Sam responding to the music, she said, "Oh my God, I thought he was deaf! They told me he was deaf." Sam was born with lesions on his brain stem. His cranial nerves are damaged, including the auditory nerve. Up to this point Sam had failed every hearing test. All of us watched as he continued to move his right arm in the air and sway with the music.

A few months later, Sam's mother, Carrie, asked us to perform at his first birthday party. There we found out just how important the *Music That Heals* performance had been. On the day we had played for him, he was in intensive care again for a serious respiratory problem after being released from another hospital, only ten hours earlier. Carrie said that seeing Sam respond to the music had given her hope. She thought, "Maybe my child has a chance, maybe he can be happy, maybe he can learn, maybe it's won't be as bad as they are telling us." She had never seen Sam so engaged. Carrie said that moment was healing for them both. Perhaps for the first time Sam may have seen that the world had something nice to offer. After that *Music That Heals* performance Sam's parents, Carrie and Scott, began to sing to Sam, something they had done after he was born. They had stopped when told he was deaf. Now they were pushing the doctors to insert tubes in his ears sooner rather than later. They were convinced he could hear. The auditory stimulation that Carrie and Scott persistently began to give Sam helped create new pathways in his brain. Each time he went for a hearing test the results were improved. Subsequently, I have had the pleasure to work with Sam privately. We sit on the floor face to face, Sam following my fingers with his head, eyes going up and down the guitar neck. I put his foot on the face of the guitar as I play to feel the vibration. Sam's story is a perfect example of *Music That Heals*. It is a testament to a musical moment that helped to bring hope back into the life of a little boy named Sam and his wonderful parents Carrie and Scott.

by Kathy Lord

## **This November HAI will provide Hope And Inspiration to an audience totaling 34,700 at 1,395 events.**

**lai** HAI's **Cultural Events Program (CEP)** opens the world of concert halls, theaters and other venues to individuals who are culturally isolated due to mental or physical disability, age or frailty. Featured in November:

### **ALVIN AILEY 2 \* BIG APPLE CIRCUS \* RADIO CITY CHRISTMAS SPECTACULAR**

▷ Members of **Tickets To Go**, HAI's senior discount ticket program, will attend Barbara Cook's 80th Birthday Concert with the NY Philharmonic, American Ballet Theatre, *A Chorus Line*, *Pygmalion* and Ballet Argentina.

▷ The two **Omni\*Buses** enable people who are bed confined and those using wheelchairs to enjoy life outside of institutions. In November, the Omni\*Buses have 26 trips scheduled, including trips to the *Big Apple Circus*, Liberty Science Center, *A Christmas Carol* at Westchester Broadway Theater, and various holiday shopping and restaurant trips.

▷ Through HAI's **STEP Program**, New York City public school students have purchased discounted tickets to Broadway and other shows *Mary Poppins*, *Wicked*, *The Color Purple*, *The Lion King*, *Big Apple Circus*, *The Little Mermaid* as well as *Ripley's Believe it or Not*. These arrangements are made possible through a vendor agreement between HAI and the NYC Department of Education.

**lai** The **On-Site Performance Program** will present approximately 200 performances during November. Usually appearing in nightclubs such as Sardi's and Sweet Rhythm, singer of swing Kelsey Jillette will perform at two nursing and rehab centers, Dewitt and Mosholou. Also in November, Orlando Marin, "The Last Mambo King" will lead his band at Riverdale Manor for Family & Friends Day.

**lai** In November the **Youth Leadership and Education Program** will continue performing *Respect* in schools, mental health facilities, homeless shelters, and detention centers. The department welcomes ten new teaching artists and two new peer educators as they expand the program curriculum. They will also be hosting a the U.S. State Department's *Promoting Tolerance Through the Arts Program*, a delegation of artists from 20 countries involved in social justice.

**lai** HAI's **Arts Workshop Program** provides ongoing, weekly participatory workshops led by professional artists in music, dance/movement, performance, visual and computer arts. Most arts workshops are subsidized by government or private grants that specify a particular consumer population. In addition, HAI is now able to serve groups that are not eligible for such subsidies or grants through direct purchases of HAI's services. Contact Betty Marks at (212) 575-7696.

**lai** **The Gallery at HAI** is currently exhibiting *Drawings and Other Discoveries* through December 22. This exhibit brings together the work of Outsider artists from both the HAI Workshop Program and from across the United States. Gallery hours are Monday through Saturday, noon to 6PM.

Outsider art is defined in many different ways and the specific parameters of the definition is often the subject of discussion and debate. Generally speaking, the art world considers work by folk and self-taught artists as Outsider, while mental health communities sometimes view *all* art by people with mental disabilities as Outsider. The Gallery at HAI presents work by artists with mental disabilities that reflect the artist's own ideas and visions disregarding mainstream artistic technical values and historical art movements.

For more information please visit our website at <http://www.hospaud.org>

### **This November HAI will reach a projected audience of 34,700 at 1,395 events...through the:**

<b>Cultural Events Program</b>	<b>3,000 at 75 events</b>
<b>On-Site Performance Program</b>	<b>8,500 at 200 performances</b>
<b>Arts Workshop Program</b>	<b>20,000 at over 1,000 hours of workshops</b>
<b>Prevention Education Program</b>	<b>3,200 at over 120 workshops</b>