

CAPE ANN CURRENTS

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QUESTIONS? Contact Editor Jane Fosberry Enos at capeann@wickedlocal.com or 978-739-1377.

MUSIC

SAGE ADVICE

Native brings chamber music — and a piece inspired by Singing beach — home to Manchester

By Keith Powers

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SPOTLIGHT

ABOUT 'JACQUES DURAN ON THE BEACH'

The Manchester Summer Chamber series commissions its first work this season, a setting for two violins and viola by Caroline Shaw. Shaw, 29, studying now for her Ph.D. in composition at Princeton, came to Manchester last year to perform (she's active as a violinist and vocalist as well as composing), and while she was there made her first visit

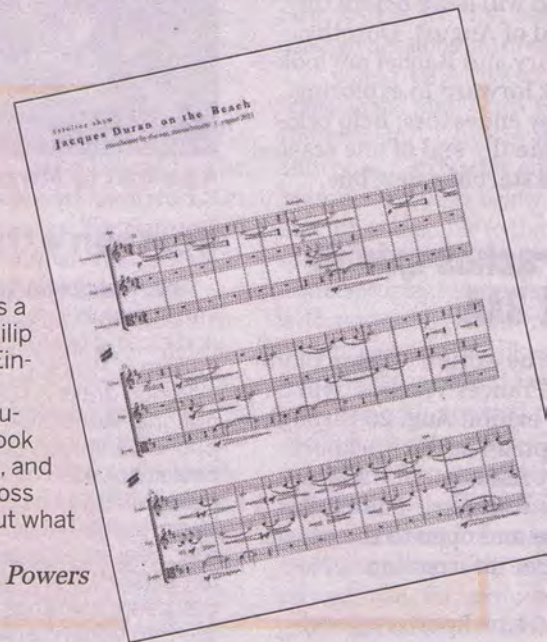
to Singing Beach.

"When Sage asked me to compose a piece for the festival, I remembered the sound and the feeling of sand under my heels," she says. "The piece starts fairly quietly, with a funny bow crescendo technique I call 'grind to a halt,' which is sort of my way of translating the squeaking sound of the sand, and the

buildup of friction.

"The title of the piece is a play on the name of Philip Glass' famous opera, 'Einstein on the Beach.' Jacques Duran is the author of a physics textbook called 'Sands, Powders, and Grains' that I came across while trying to figure out what makes sand 'sing'."

— Keith Powers



With major organizations like Rockport Music, established ensembles like Music at Eden's Edge, and aggressive new presenters like Annisquam Village Church and others, you'd think that chamber music was everywhere on Cape Ann.

But not in Manchester. At least, not until now.

For the past three summers violinist Sage Cole, a Manchester native who now lives in New York after her training at Barnard, Wisconsin-Madison and the Manhattan School of Music, has returned to her hometown to present the

Manchester Summer Chamber Music series. This year's concerts take place this Friday and next, featuring a broad range of music, including a

world premiere.

"We wanted it to be in Manchester," Cole says. "We thought about bringing some live music to the area, and it

fell together. One of the wonderful things is getting musicians who normally teach and play in orchestras together to play chamber music.

"The idea is to get the community involved in the project. All of us have been at music festivals in Vermont and oth-

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Estelle Choi, Verena Sennekamp and Sage Cole are among the musicians performing in the Manchester Summer Chamber Music series. COURTESY PHOTO

CLASSICAL

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er places, and it's exciting to see how people get interested. We've had a great response so far from the community, people who haven't had the chance to see live musicians in town before."

This month's two performances are in decidedly different venues: first, a house concert (open to the public), at the home of Isabella and Stephan Bates; and the following week at First Parish Church.

"It's something that's exciting and makes people curious," Cole says. "That's why we're hosting a house concert. I spoke to the Bates, and they are an artistic couple who have found that there isn't anything like this in town."

In an unusual twist, Cole and her fellow musicians — friendships and connections that she and co-director Lorna Tsai have made in school and as busy freelancers — present individual movements from various pieces, with this summer's presentations including excerpts from major works from Mendelssohn, Mozart, Brahms and Schubert.

"Doing movements enables



Sage Cole, second from left, and her fellow musicians perform at a concert in her hometown of Manchester last year.

us to present a more varied concert," Cole says. "And also to make the most of our rehearsal time. It's a great way to instruct, and we're able to do a lot of different things and present them at their best."

"We're also doing a world premiere by Caroline Shaw, a piece about Singing Beach," Cole says. "Sometimes I have

misgivings about contemporary works. I worry that it will be too cerebral or intellectual, but this piece walks that fine line. We'll be playing the piece twice in the same concert (at the second performance), so that audiences will get a chance to really learn about it."

Cole shares responsibilities for organizing the series with

Tsai, a violinist whom she met in high school during summer music camp. "She's probably a little more on the artistic side, with me on the executive side," Cole says. "We've been learning a lot in the past few years. But in general, more and more musicians in my generation are taking responsibility for creating their own audiences."

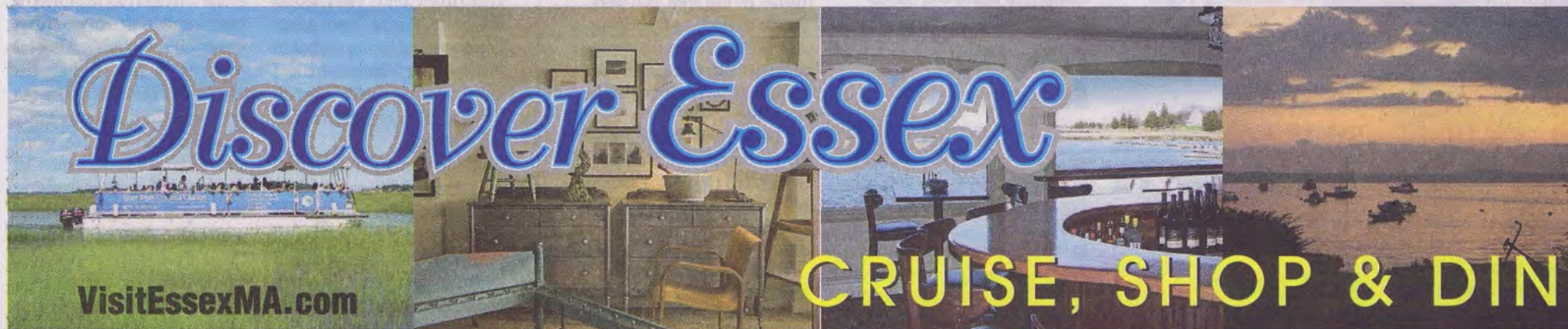
If you go...

What: Manchester Summer Music concerts

Where: Residence of Isabella Stephan Bates, 2 Masconomet Manchester (Aug. 19); and First Parish Chapel, Chapel Lane, Manchester (Aug. 26)

When: Friday, Aug. 19, and Friday, Aug. 26, both at 7:30 p.m.

Tickets: \$15-\$40. Call 978-524-0404 or online at www.manchesterchambermusic.org.



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