



CONVERGENCE HEALTH EQUITY IN A CHANGING CLIMATE



Program Description

Everyone deserves a healthy environment and access to the outdoors.

Research demonstrates that clean air, water, and access to the outdoors are vital to human health. So if nature is a necessity for everyone's health and well-being, why is it so hard for some people to access it? What are the consequences?

The vital connections between health, equity, and nature are increasingly visible across the United States. Throughout this 90-minute performance, audiences will watch and listen to the lived experiences of members of communities affected by environmental racism and health inequities and their interconnections through music, illustration, and videography.

Convergence: Health Equity in a Changing Climate is a collaboration between [Black Moon Trio](#) and [Brushwood Center at Ryerson Woods](#) and features two commissioned compositions from composers Marc Mellits and Jerod Impichchaachaaha' Tate as well as original artwork from five visual artists across the country to emphasize the data collected from Brushwood Center's [Health, Equity, and Nature Accelerator Report](#).

List of Terms (A glossary can be found at the end of this guide)

Coal Ash
Environmental Justice
Ethylene Oxide
Health Equity
French Horn
Melody
Nature / Green Space / Blue Space

Nature-Based Solutions
Piano
Rhythm
Superfund Sites
Tempo
Violin

Musical selections include excerpts from the following:

Trio for Horn, Violin, and Piano by Eric Ewazen

Tochchi'na by Jerod Impichchaachaaha' Tate

Black Moon by Marc Mellits

Horn Trio by Jonathan Leshnoff

Drifter by TJ Cole

Academic Standards

Fine Arts - Visual Arts

Anchor Standard 7: Perceive and analyze artistic work.

- VA:Re7.2.PK
- VA:Re7.2.K
- VA:Re7.2.1
- VA:Re7.2.2
- VA:Re7.2.3
- VA:Re7.2.4
- VA:Re7.2.5

Anchor Standard 8: Construct meaningful interpretations of artistic work.

- VA:Re8.1.PK
- VA:Re8.1.K
- VA:Re8.1.1
- VA:Re8.1.2
- VA:Re8.1.3
- VA:Re8.1.4
- VA:Re8.1.5

Anchor Standard 11: Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context to deepen understanding.

- VA:Cn11.1.PK
- VA:Cn11.1.K
- VA:Cn11.1.4
- VA:Cn11.1.5
- VA:Cn11.1.6
- VA:Cn11.1.II

Fine Arts - Music

Anchor Standard 7: Perceive and analyze artistic work.

- MU:Re7.1.3
- MU:Re7.1.4
- MU:Re7.1.5

Anchor Standard 8: Construct meaningful interpretations of artistic work.

- MU:Re8.1.3
- MU:Re8.1.4
- MU:Re8.1.5

Physical Development and Health

State Goal 22: Understand principles of health promotion and the prevention and treatment of illness and injury.

C. Explain how the environment can affect health.

- 22.C.1a
- 22.C.2a
- 22.C.3a
- 22.C.4a
- 22.C.5a

Science

K-ESS3-3. Communicate solutions that will reduce the impact of humans on the land, water, air, and/or other living things in the local environment.

5-ESS3-1. Obtain and combine information about ways individual communities use science ideas to protect the Earth's resources and environment.

Social Emotional Learning

Goal 2: Use social-awareness and interpersonal skills to establish and maintain positive relationships

A. Recognize the feelings and perspectives of others.

- 2A.1a.
- 2A.1b.
- 2A.4a.
- 2A.5a.

B. Recognize individual and group similarities and differences.

- 2B.1a.
- 2B.2a.
- 2B.3a.

Goal 3: Demonstrate decision-making skills and responsible behaviors in personal, school and community contexts.

A. Consider ethical, safety, and societal factors in making decisions

- 3A.1a.
- 3A.2a.
- 3A.2b.
- 3A.3a.
- 3A.4a.
- 3A.4b.
- 3A.5b.

C. Contribute to the well-being of one's school and community.

- 3C.1b.
- 3C.2b.
- 3C.3b.

Program Notes

Trio for Violin, Horn, and Piano

Eric Ewazen (b. 1954)

This piece represents an homage to one of my favorite chamber pieces of all time, the Trio for Horn, Violin, and Piano by Brahms. Having both performed (on piano) and analyzed that work, I so loved Brahms' wonderful weaving of the colors of the instruments, creating an almost orchestral color palette. The four movements are modeled after the Brahms, with a slow-fast-slow-fast scheme to the entire work. A gentle, somewhat mysterious first movement accumulates depth and momentum as it proceeds, only to return to the gentle world of the opening. The second movement is a rip-roaring scherzo, a true energetic dance with melodies tossed back and forth from the violin to the horn, while the piano provides a resonant accompaniment, inserting its own lively melodies as counterpoint to the violin and horn. The third movement is filled with melancholy, with long lyric melodies appearing sometimes as solos, sometimes as duets, and sometimes as a chorale with all three instruments singing their soulful songs. The final movement, following an austere, dramatic introduction, turns into a grand fugue, with a jumping fugue theme full of life and excitement, culminating in the themes heard in augmentation, strong and bold.

- Eric Ewazen



Tochchi'na

Jerod Impichchaachaaha' Tate (b. 1968)

Commissioned by Brushwood Center & Black Moon Trio

Tochchi'na is the Chickasaw word for the number three and became the title of this work commissioned by Black Moon Trio to represent the three musicians. The work is loosely based upon a Choctaw church hymn that was composed in the 1800's. One very unique artistic result of European contact is the American Indian church hymn. As missionaries fanned out across Indian Country they became the first to document our Native languages and create translations of The Bible and other Christian texts, including church hymns. This led to a new series of a hybrid music, composed by tribal citizens.

For Southeast American Indians (Choctaw, Chickasaw, Cherokee, Creek and Seminole) this hybrid style of music is now over 200 years old and contains a vast repertoire. The music is unmistakably Native and added a third category of traditional music alongside stomp dancing music and our old folk songs.

Tochchi'na presents the Choctaw Hymn 53 as the centerpiece and is embedded within my abstractions and feelings of the ancient time in which it was composed.

- Jerod Impichchaachaaha' Tate



Black Moon

Marc Mellits (b. 1966)

Commissioned by Brushwood Center & Black Moon Trio

“Black Moon” is a lunar infused dream in seven movements, each movement illuminating a vision of lunar inspiration. The name Black Moon itself comes from the horn trio the music was written for but also from a month with two new moons, among other meanings. Some of the movements are rooted in Greek mythology, for example Selene, sometimes called Cynthia, the goddess of the Moon, or her sister, Eos, the goddess of dawn. Other movements draw inspiration from natural lunar phenomena, like a Supermoon, when our moon seems so large it could fall out of the night sky, or the rarely seen Blue Moon. Dark Moon is a story of forbidden love that can only hide on the dark side of the moon. The final movement, Red Moon, occurring during a total lunar eclipse, is a glimpse into the militaristic underworld looming within the shadow of the moon.

- Marc Mellits



Horn Trio

Jonathan Leshnoff (b. 1973)

Baltimore-based Jonathan Leshnoff is among the most-performed of recent American composers, his prolific output gaining a reputation for its concentrated expression and lyricism. Working within tonal confines, Leshnoff has also explored the expressive potential of chamber music through works for mixed instruments and four published string quartets.

Leshnoff’s Horn Trio makes a clear progression from darkness to light. Its *Pensive* first movement is initially led by fulsome phrases from the violin, supported by softer thoughts from horn and piano. The horn rises from its slumber, however, in striking high register phrases looking to raise the music’s energy.



Drifter

TJ Cole (b. 1993)

This piece was inspired by a woodblock print called “Drifter” by artist Rockwell Kent. The print depicts a figure sitting in a small boat looking up at a night sky with wonder as he drifts in the water.

- TJ Cole



Guidelines for Follow-Up Discussion

What type of instrument is a french horn? A violin? A piano?

French horn is a brass instrument. Violin is a string instrument. Piano can be a string instrument and a percussion instrument.

What is chamber music?

Chamber music is when people come together to make music without a leader. A soloist plays music alone. An orchestra follows a conductor. A chamber group is a group of people who make decisions together.

Why is it important to spend time outside?

Lots of researchers are finding that spending time outside can do great things for your mind and body.

“Exposure to nature, just being outdoors and around trees, fields, woods, and the sky actually lowers people’s blood pressure. It has a positive impact on the reduction of stress hormones in the blood system....and people report feeling better, feeling happier, calmer, feeling more connected when they get to spend time outdoors, especially with other people. But it’s also beneficial just being by yourself and taking a walk.”

- Dr. Robert Heinrich, Psychologist, Grayslake, Illinois

Why aren’t we outside more?

Sometimes it can be hard for people to get outside because their parks are far away and they don’t have a way to get there, or maybe the information about their local nature areas is in a language they can’t speak. We call these things that keep people from something they want or need “barriers”. What are some barriers that keep you from going outside?

Ask your student(s) for feedback using some of the following questions or topics

What was your favorite piece of music and why?

What was your favorite instrument and why?

How did the string instrument make sound?

How did the piano make sound?

How did the brass instrument make sound?

What can you do to help promote spending time in nature at your school or in your neighborhood?

I was surprised to learn...

Additional Activities

Forest Bathing Walk for Kids

The practice of *shinrin-yoku*, or forest bathing, which was officially recognized by the Japanese government in the 1980s as a researched backed nature-wellness practice. It's different from hiking, which is about reaching a destination, or taking a nature walk, which focuses on identifying plants and animals. Forest bathing encourages participants to engage with nature slowly and deliberately. You can try this nature-based practice no matter where you live — and it has tangible physical and mental health benefits for kids.

Ready to try forest bathing with your kids? Here are a few guidelines to get you started.

Be flexible.

Helene Gibbons, a forest-bathing guide, has adapted many practices into 5-to-15-minute breaks that teachers can do with children throughout the day. "It's not always realistic to do an hour-long forest-bathing walk with kids," she says. Remember, forest bathing can happen anywhere, even indoors with a potted plant or looking out the window, and doesn't require a trip to nature preserve or park to feel the benefits.

Shortening the amount of time you focus on a forest-bathing activity is one way to keep it loose, particularly for younger children. Giving them permission to talk and move around, regardless of the activity, is another way to be more flexible.

"We call the activities 'invitations' because you're always welcome to adapt them," Gibbons says. "Kids need autonomy to make decisions for themselves. They like to have that freedom."

Draw attention to the sensory experience.

"Using your senses is all about noticing your surroundings, being alert, and being present—things that meditation does as well," says Katy Bowman, a bio-mechanist and author of *Grow Wild: The Whole-Child, Whole-Family, Nature-Rich Guide to Moving More*.

"When you're listening for all the nature sounds you can hear, you're focused on something that's not the jibber jabber in your own head," she says.

Ask questions that encourage children to focus on their senses. What does the grass feel like? Can you see different shapes and colors? Take a deep breath in through your nose- what do you smell? Take a deep breath in through your mouth- how does the air feel on your tongue?

Forest Bathing Walk for Kids, cont.

Turn it into a game.

These activities help provide a fun, loose structure that encourages children to be more mindful of their natural surroundings:

- – Use a rope or hula hoop to create a circle in the grass. Then encourage children to explore the are with a magnifying glass or ask them to zoom in with their eyes to notice the tiny worlds within the hula hoop"
- – In the 'What's in Motion' game, Nazarian asks kids to walk very slowly and notice what's in motion while they're in motion. Often they'll notice big movements like birds, then smaller ones like ants. "One time a breeze came through and dispersed hundreds of helicopter seeds," she says. "We had been stepping on them for weeks but paying attention to them floating above our heads was delightful." Children can notice big movements like birds, then smaller ones like ants and try to imitate the different types of movement with their bodies.
- – To extend the immersion, try the Camera Game. One kid is the photographer, and the other is the camera. The camera closes his or her eyes, and the photographer guides the camera to a natural scene like a tree trunk. When the photographer signals, the camera opens his or her eyes and captures as much detail of the scene as possible. Depending on the age of your child, encourage them to write about or draw what they see.
- – Lie on your back, watch the clouds float by and see what shapes and images you see.
- – For a rainy-day activity, Gibbons suggests sitting by an open window and listening to the rain for a few minutes. Then have kids draw a picture of how they feel.

Nature's Instruments: Making Music Outside

Drum Sticks

The stick is nature's most convenient instrument! Sticks are easy to find around the yard, especially after all the windy days we've had this year. *Note: we are not encouraging children to play their drumsticks anywhere they want!* Part of the fun is finding something outside like a rock or tree stump that can withstand stick music. Try to find sticks that look the most like a drum stick. You can even peel off the bark and notice that the color is very similar. Play a recording on your phone, or sing a song to tap the sticks to. Before you know it, your kids will feel the thrill of being a nature drummer!

Acorn Whistles

Playing the acorn whistle takes some practice, but once your kids master the skill they won't want to stop! For this instrument, you only need the top of the acorn. Hold it in between your thumbs with just a tiny triangle to blow into. Put your mouth on your thumb's knuckles, and blow. This whistle can be heard for miles!

The Power of Pebbles

For this instrument, you may have to head to a local park with canal access or a pond. Safety first with this activity, don't forget life jackets and have adequate adult supervision for the kids! Lake Michigan, Waukegan ravines, and local ponds are great places to check out in the Lake County area. To make music using water, simply find some pebbles or rocks along the shoreline. Drop one in the water, then another. Do they make different sounds? Is it a *plunk* or a *thump*?

If you aren't up for plunking pebbles, they actually make great instruments without water! Find two pebbles and tap them together. *Click, click, click*. The sounds you will hear from tapping two rocks together are similar to a Cuban instrument called the clave. Claves keep the beat for the whole band, and pebbles can too!

Pinecone Scraper

If you have pine trees at your house, go check underneath them for a pine cone. These large seeds have so much potential to grow into a pine tree *or* become an instrument! After you find the pinecone, you'll need a small stick to act as the scraper. If you're right-handed, hold the pinecone in your left hand and scrape across it with the stick. Depending on the direction you scrape, you will get a different sound.

Glossary

Coal Ash - What is left behind when power plants burn coal for energy; it is a toxic mix of carcinogens, neurotoxins, and other hazardous pollutants.

Environmental Justice - The idea that everyone deserves to live with clean air, water, and soil, and should be included in making decisions about things that could cause changes in their community's environment.

Ethylene Oxide - A flammable, colorless gas used to sterilize equipment and plastic devices. Ethylene oxide was reclassified as a human carcinogen by the EPA in 2016.

Climate Change - Long-term shifts in temperatures and weather patterns.

Health Equity - Everyone has a fair and just opportunity to access their full health potential.

French Horn - a brass instrument with a coiled tube, valves, and a wide bell.

Melody - the part of the music that is easy to sing and remember.

Nature / Green Space / Blue Space - An area where one can recreate or enjoy green (e.g., parks, gardens, backyards, preserves, etc.) and blue (e.g., lakes, ponds, oceans, rivers, etc.) spaces in whatever way is accessible to the individual.

Nature-Based Solutions - Employing nature at a meaningful scale for multiple benefits.

Piano - a keyboard musical instrument having wire strings that sound when struck by felt-covered hammers operated from a keyboard.

Rhythm - the placement of sounds in time.

Superfund Sites - Locations polluted with hazardous materials. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has the responsibility to conduct removal actions to protect public health and environment, ensure community involvement, and enforce against responsible parties.

Tempo - the speed or pace of a given piece.

Violin - a stringed musical instrument of treble pitch, played with a horsehair bow

Additional Online Resources for Learning about Health Equity Online

Find Yourself Outside Activity Book from Brushwood Center
https://www.brushwoodcenter.org/uploads/1/3/2/9/132959783/find_yourself_outside.pdf

Kids Environment Kids Health from the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences
<https://kids.niehs.nih.gov/topics/environment-health/environmental-justice>

Environmental Justice; Why We Should Teach It and How to Get Started from the National Educational Association
<https://www.nea.org/nea-today/all-news-articles/environmental-justice-why-we-should-teach-it-and-how-get-started>

Check out these amazing books about Health Equity and the Outdoors!

Jayden's Impossible Garden by Mélinda Mangal and Ken Daley
<https://a.co/d/OHLBMOI>

The Mess That We Made by Michelle Lord and Julia Blattman
<https://a.co/d/bDkFwCl>

Harlem Grown: How One Big Idea Transformed a Neighborhood by Tony Hillery and Jessie Hartland
<https://a.co/d/jioMRg5>

About the Musicians: Black Moon Trio

Black Moon Trio is committed to collaboratively affecting positive change in communities through chamber music. They reimagine the breadth of a horn, violin, and piano trio by showcasing underrepresented voices in their artistic programming and original commissions, inspiring young musicians and non-musicians alike through captivating educational programs, and connecting community members through the arts. By engaging with diverse audiences, youth, and artists of every type, Black Moon Trio works to prove that classical music is for everyone.

Black Moon Trio was founded in 2022 by Parker Nelson, Jeremy Vigil, and Khelsey Zarraga. Each rooted in musical, cultural, and community organizations across the Chicago region, Parker, Jeremy, and Khelsey aim to continue making classical music available and relevant to everyone. Harnessing the experience from years of professional chamber music performance, music-making in social service settings, facilitating workshops at universities, and developing curriculum for youth in schools and community development through music, Black Moon Trio is excited to provide a classical music experience that resonates far beyond the reverberations of a final chord.

Recent projects include *Spilling Over*: a program created in collaboration with the Smart Museum of Art at the University of Chicago inspired by the works of visual artist and activist, Bob Thompson; *Honeybee*: a co-created performance and workshop of Candace Fleming and Eric Rohmann's award-winning children's book, *Honeybee: The Busy Life of Apis Mellifera* promoting the understanding, appreciation, and preservation of honeybees and other migratory pollinators; and *Sow the Seeds*: a collaboration with New York Times Best-Selling author and Chicago-native, Michael Tyler, in an interactive concert and journaling experience for audiences to actively address subjects of wellness and community through music, poetry, and nature guided by Tyler's *Sow the Seeds: A Composition in Verse*.

Reaching thousands of students annually through its arts-integrated educational programs, Black Moon Trio connects K-12 core curricula to vivid, custom-crafted, and interactive musical experiences which challenge students to share and lead. Black Moon Trio has presented performances and residencies at numerous Chicago public schools in partnership with Classical Music Chicago and Ravinia's Reach*Teach*Play program.

Black Moon Trio is ensemble-in-residence at **Brushwood Center at Ryerson Woods**.



About the Artists:

Natashna Anderson

Natashna Anderson (natashNa A.) is a Designer, Illustrator and Bookmaker. A Brooklyn native, she considers herself a creative in all aspects. Her work constantly reimagines itself as murals, board games, and more recently, as patterns. She received her BFA in Visual Communications at School of the Art Institute of Chicago. The city of Chicago is where she currently lives and works. Her work explores and interprets the idea of narrative within black portrayal, typography, and fairytales.



Kelley Clink

Kelley Clink is an author, illustrator, artist, and suicide prevention/mental health advocate. Over the years her writing has appeared in numerous magazines and literary journals, including *Gettysburg Review*, *Colorado Review*, *Shambhala Sun*, *Woman's Day*, and *The Huffington Post*. She's spoken about her lived experience as a suicide attempt and loss survivor to crowds as big as 4,000 and books clubs as small as 6. In 2014, she won the Beacon Street Prize in Nonfiction, and was nominated for the Pushcart Prize. In 2015 her memoir, *A Different Kind of Same*, was published, and was named Book of the Year by the Chicago Writers Association.



Her artwork has recently appeared in *Photo Trouvee Magazine* (issues 7 and 10), the *Making Space* show at the Lill Street Art Center, *This is Your Allowance* at Positive Space Studios, *Tiny Works* at the Fulton Street Collective, the 2023 Terrain Biennial, the Angelica Kauffmann Gallery, and more. She is currently working on a young adult novel and several picture books.

Laura Horan

Laura is a freelance illustrator working in the Chicagoland area. She graduated in 2016 from the University of Illinois at Chicago with a BFA in Fine Art, and has since been pursuing her passion for vibrant and inventive illustration. Her work is heavily influenced by cartoons, impressionism, and the crazy cast of characters that is her pets. She loves cooking up silly ideas and scenarios, and creating bright and warm illustrations that bring out the childish side in all of us.



About the Artists (cont.):

Lokosh

Lokosh (Joshua D. Hinson) is a citizen of the Chickasaw Nation. A fluent speaker of the Chickasaw language and an award-winning artist, he holds a Bachelors of Fine Arts degree in Painting from Abilene Christian University, a master's degree in Native American Art History from the University of New Mexico, and a PhD in Native Language Revitalization from the University of Oklahoma. He makes art on the Chickasaw Nation Reservation, Ada, Oklahoma.

Hinson, whose Chickasaw name Lokosh translates as "Gourd," is of the Imatapo (Their Lean-to People) house group and Kowishto' (Panther) clan.



Naimah Thomas

Naimah Thomas is a registered and board-certified art therapist (ATR-BC), and a licensed professional counselor (LPC) in Illinois, with a Master of Arts in art therapy. Naimah graduated from Columbia College Chicago with a Bachelor of Arts, with a focus in graphic design.

She is committed to providing a person-centered approach to healing with a focus on intergenerational cultural trauma that acknowledges the multiple systems of oppression and the impact those systems have on our emotional, mental, and physical well-being. Collaborating with people the with hopes of co-creating brave spaces that invite multiple perspectives, active listening, and opportunities for growth and healing to occur. Using art as a means to fostering connections, empower, and amplify their voices, experiences, and expression.

Weaving traditional talk therapy with elements of art therapy and creative expression, all based on what each individual prefers. Art therapy differs greatly from an art lesson and is grounded in the knowledge of human development, psychological theories and counseling techniques. Art therapy can be beneficial for anyone navigating obstacles, who would like to express emotions, improve focus, relaxation, and self-exploration.



About the Collaborator:

Brushwood Center at Ryerson Woods



Brushwood Center at Ryerson Woods works collaboratively with community partners, artists, health care providers, and scientists to improve health equity and access to nature in Lake County, Illinois, and the Chicago region. We engage people with the outdoors through the arts, environmental education, and community action. Brushwood Center's programs focus on youth, families, Military Veterans, and those facing racial and economic injustices.

Brushwood Center collaborates closely with community partners to offer art and nature programs with youth, families, Military Veterans, seniors, artists, and area residents. Our program strategy is rooted in the asset-based community engagement model, which is a bottom-up way of working with communities that focuses on community strengths and assets rather than on deficits and problems.

Specifically, Brushwood Center prioritizes:

- Building authentic, long-term relationships with community-based organizations and partners;
- Collaborating with community assets to develop mutually beneficial programs and contributing resources where needed to advance the health of people and the planet; and
- Combatting settler colonial legacies and false narratives, such as white saviorism, through cultural and artistic platforms.

Brushwood Center at Ryerson Woods is nestled in 565 acres of magnificent woodlands in the heart of Lake County, Illinois. The preserve's rich natural and cultural history is recognized by its dual designation as an Illinois Nature Preserve and as a Historic District by the National Register of Historic Places. This site was originally home and hunting grounds of the Potawatomi people and other local indigenous communities.

Brushwood Center was founded in 1984 to support the preservation of the woods following the transfer of the land and home from Nora and Edward Ryerson along with several neighboring families' properties to Lake County Forest Preserves. Originally named Friends of Ryerson Woods, the organization began as an advisory committee of the Lake County Forest Preserves and evolved into an independent 501 c(3) organization now known as Brushwood Center at Ryerson Woods.

Today, Brushwood Center operates through a license agreement with Lake County Forest Preserves and receives no direct financial support from the Preserves. Our programs thrive thanks to the generosity of individual, foundation, and corporate donors who support our high quality, educational and artistic programs throughout the year that encourage the preservation and care of our local greenspaces.

Thanks to our new strategic plan, Brushwood Center has renewed its commitment to the arts and nature with an invigorated focus on community partnerships, inclusion, and promotion of art and nature for personal and community wellbeing. We actively focus our programs on veterans and low-income communities in Lake and Cook Counties as well as our immediate community in Riverwoods.