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Belting out some tunes

Joe Jarosz | Posted: Tuesday, September 20, 2011 9:20 pm



Martial artist goes with the flow of music from Dave Eggar and his band to help kick off Jackson Concert Series

MUSCATINE, Iowa — The Beatles, Johann Sebastian Bach and Bob Marley were brought to life at the Wesley United Methodist Church.

On Tuesday afternoon, the Jackson Concert Series brought Dave Eggar and his creative mix of classical music and karate to Muscatine.

Al Brotherton, 69 of Muscatine, chair of the Jackson Concert Series Committee, said they work with the Quad Cities Visiting Artist series to bring artists to the area.

“It’s a gift to the community that we provide free music,” Brotherton said. “I thought they were neat and entertaining.”

The group hails from New York and is led by Dave Eggar on cello and consists of Chuck Palmer, Ohio on percussion/drums, Ariel De La Portilla on bass, and fourth-degree black belt James Luk performing karate.

“This is the main crux of the band but we’ve been experimenting with a six-piece band, dancers and more people performing karate recently,” Eggar said.

As part of the Quad Cities Visiting Artist Series, Eggar and his band perform primarily for schools for a week, usually playing three schools a day.

“We play for about 1,200 students a day,” Eggar said. “But we’re able to play these intimate shows as well.”

For their performance at Wesley, the band played contemporary music with a classical sound to about 50-60 people. The band also focused more on the music for this performance, however, Luk demonstrated the fluid motion of karate.

Eggar said he helped the Lincoln Center in New York think of the idea of combining the two. The Center wanted to showcase classical music with a show. Eggar worked with the program director of the Center to flesh out the idea. Eggar has had a lifelong appreciation for karate and thought he could create something with the two.

“The Lincoln Center originally wanted the Harlem Boys Choir to join me on stage,” Eggar said. “But the fusion from the first show was powerful that we kept it going.”

Eggar recently recorded the strings for the band Evanescence’s new album.

Tuesday’s crowd, — a mostly older one — got into the performance, clapping along to songs they recognized. After the performance, the band gave away free music and download cards.

Al and Hope Weese, both 86 and of Muscatine, came after seeing the ad in the paper.

“We both enjoyed it,” Al said. “It was unlike anything we’ve ever seen before.”

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