



Cello, karate meet in Dave Eggar's performance

David Burke | Posted: Thursday, September 22, 2011 12:25 pm

Cello master Dave Eggar said he knew his brainstorm of combining music with karate in a performance worked when a ballet director acquaintance attended one of the first performances.

And cried.

"They're similar in that they bring out the athleticism because of the music," Eggar said.

That combination of musical arts and martial arts has been on display, thanks to Eggar, his quartet and two karate masters, on tour for the past two weeks with the Quad-City Arts visiting artist series.

A public finale will be Saturday night at Galvin Fine Arts Center, St. Ambrose University, Davenport.

The idea began a year and a half ago when a Lincoln Center program wanted something different for a new performance space, fusing fine arts with the community.

Eggar went to his karate teacher, James Luk, and they began brainstorming.

"We decided to put these together to show how even though they're very different, there's a lot of principles that are very similar. It helps viewers to see the art behind karate," said Eggar, a 37-year-old New York City native who was up for his first Grammy Award this year.

"I thought it was fantastic," said Luk, a 29-year-old fourth-degree black belt. "I look at karate as an actual art form, more than just kicking and punching."

Eggar said the idea got mixed reactions at first.

"All of my musical friends who aren't classical music people thought it was awesome. But my classical friends were very skeptical before they came to a performance and loved it," he said.

"Musicians don't always understand a visual art form. They thought, 'Why are you doing this sport with music?'" he said.

Eggar, who has a doctorate in cello from The Juilliard School, had not even heard pop or rock music until he was asked to go out on the road with The Who - and given the suggestion to smash his cello at the end of the night. It has led to collaborations with an array of performers in various styles of music.

He said Saturday's performance includes a variety of music from around the world.

"What's exciting is embracing a new internationalism in music. Instead of world music, I see it as something that is more about telling stories together," he said.

"You're going to see the music interacting with all different forms of karate," he added. "I think it'll give people a really unique perspective on these two art forms and just a fun, high-energy evening."