

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**ISABELLA  
STEWART GARDNER  
MUSEUM**

***FREE*** “Neighborhood Nights” events at the Gardner Museum celebrate art, music and community, with live performances and art-making activities for the whole family

*Inspired by the diversity of Boston communities, this year’s annual summer evening celebrations will emphasize African-American, Latin American, Chinese and Japanese art and culture through storytelling, dance, jazz, poetry and the visual arts*

*Nights feature free performances by local artists from Dorchester, Cambridge, West Roxbury and Boston*

**Thursdays, July 12, July 26 & August 9, 2007 | 5:00-8:00 pm | *FREE for all!***



Children enjoying *Neighborhood Nights*

BOSTON, JUNE 26, 2007 – This summer, the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum celebrates community with a series of three *free Neighborhood Nights* filled with music and art. A summer tradition now in its sixth year, *Neighborhood Nights* invite residents of neighboring communities into the Museum for musical performances under the stars, fun art-making projects for children and adults, and free admission to the galleries and special exhibition. These evening celebrations also give visitors the special opportunity to enjoy the museum and outdoor gardens at twilight, and continue Isabella Gardner’s vision that her museum be dedicated to the enjoyment and education of the public, forever.

Each evening, a new, creative theme encourages visitors to discover a different side of the museum and, in particular this year, new cultures. Inspired by the diversity of Boston communities, this year’s events will focus on African-American, Latin American, Chinese and Japanese art and culture, with traditional storytelling, dance, music and more. Guests will also enjoy free admission to this summer’s exhibition, *Stefano Arienti: The Asian Shore* (June 29-October 14, 2007), a contemplative contemporary installation inspired by Isabella Gardner’s Asian art collection.

“Isabella Gardner’s travels around the world inspired her to collect works from many different artistic traditions, from ancient China to Renaissance Italy” says Peggy Burchenal, *Curator of Education and Public Programs*. “This year at *Neighborhood Nights*, as we celebrate the diversity of our surrounding communities, we also celebrate Isabella’s curiosity about the world’s many cultures.”

**CELEBRATING DIVERSE CULTURES**

*Neighborhood Nights* 2007 pays homage to the many cultures of the museum’s neighbors in the Fenway, Mission Hill, Chinatown, Jamaica Plain, Roxbury, Dorchester, and the South End with programs emphasizing African-American, Latin American, Chinese and Japanese art, culture and history.

On July 12<sup>th</sup>, the Gardner will kick off the sixth season of *Neighborhood Nights* with a program called “Magic Stories.” Visitors will be invited to explore the new exhibition *Stefano Arienti: The Asian Shore*, inspired by the museum’s Japanese art collection, and create their own colorful Japanese story scrolls. A pair of performances will also celebrate African-American history. Doll E. Daze, a project centered on a collection of over 5,000 black dolls started by a family of Dorchester women, will present stories of the family’s African ancestors. Later in the evening, Bass-Line Motion performs *The Path*, a “choreopoem” pairing spoken word and dance, and depicting the African-American experience—past, present and future—and social issues through work songs, the blues and hip hop. The performance is directed by West Roxbury native and Impulse Dance Company Artistic Director Adrienne Hawkins, whose style incorporates jazz, ballet and rock styles.

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In the second event, on July 26<sup>th</sup>, Chinese culture will take center stage with storytelling by Li Min Mo, whose performances have been described as “an artful combination of narrative and theater.” An award-winning storyteller and artist with 20 years of experience working with children and adults, Li Min was born in China and lived in many parts of the world before settling in Cambridge, where she now lives. Boston native Lori Dow will perform a jazz concert in the outdoor garden.

Finally, on August 9<sup>th</sup> Afro-Latin band Mango Blue will perform its own unique blend of jazz and world music. Led by Ecuadorian composer, bassist and singer Alex Alvear, the band’s sound integrates a wide array of influences from R&B, jazz and funk to Caribbean roots, with strong Afro-Latin rhythms. With a sound that transcends ethnic boundaries, Mango Blue’s set will be a fitting close to this varied season of *Neighborhood Nights*.

**“MAGIC STORIES”: Thursday, July 12 (5:00-8:00 p.m.)**

**Stories performed and told to awaken the stories in you...**

- Listen as the Dorchester-based Doll E. Daze Project tells the history of their African ancestors through storytelling and doll-making;
- Draw or write messages of peace to incorporate in the Gardner’s *Interactive Nesting* project;
- Design and make a colorful Japanese scroll to tell your very own story;
- Experience the past, present and future as Bass-Line Motion presents *The Path: A Choreopoem* featuring dancer Adrienne Hawkins and bassist and poet Larry Roland;
- AND enjoy *Free* admission to the museum including access to:
  - *Stefano Arienti: The Asian Shore* (June 29-October 14, 2007), a contemplative contemporary installation inspired by Isabella Stewart Gardner’s Asian art collection; and
  - Summer courtyard garden display featuring lace-cap hydrangeas, Cape Primrose and Delphinium.

**“WELCOME TO THE STARLIT SUMMER”: Thursday, July 26 (5:00-8:00 p.m.)**

**Enjoy a captivating evening of universal harmony, timeless art and music...**

- Listen to stories of good fortune and Chinese culture by Cambridge storyteller Li Min Mo;
- Look through a telescope to explore the wonders of the evening sky;
- Make your own moon and stars mobile;
- Listen to the live soulful sounds of jazz music with the Boston-based Lori Dow Band;
- AND enjoy *Free* admission to the museum including access to:
  - *Stefano Arienti: The Asian Shore* (June 29-October 14, 2007), a contemplative contemporary installation inspired by Isabella Stewart Gardner’s Asian art collection; and
  - Summer courtyard garden display featuring lace-cap hydrangeas, Cape Primrose and Delphinium.

**“ONE SWINGIN’ NIGHT” Thursday, August 9(5:00-8:00 p.m.)**

**Escape the summer heat to enjoy an upbeat evening of music and surprises...**

- Listen to amazing stories of adventures in far away places;
- Go on a musical scavenger hunt to find famous musicians;
- Create your own musical instruments to play;
- The beat heats up as you listen to live Latin music by Mango Blue
- AND enjoy *Free* admission to the museum including access to:
  - *Stefano Arienti: The Asian Shore* (June 29-October 14, 2007), a contemplative contemporary installation inspired by Isabella Stewart Gardner’s Asian art collection; and
  - Summer courtyard garden display featuring lace-cap hydrangeas, Cape Primrose and Delphinium.

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**ISABELLA STEWART GARDNER MUSEUM** • 280 The Fenway Boston MA 02115 617.566.1401 [www.gardnermuseum.org](http://www.gardnermuseum.org) • Tue.-Sun., 11 am-5 pm • \$12 adults; \$10 seniors; \$5 students; \$2 off with same day Museums of Fine Arts admission; FREE children under 18 and all named "Isabella" • Modeled after a 15<sup>th</sup>-century Venetian palazzo surrounding an interior courtyard garden, the century-old Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum is home to one of the most remarkable art collections in the world, featuring works by Rembrandt, Michelangelo, Raphael, Degas and Sargent. Changing exhibitions, the oldest museum music program in the country, and seasonal courtyard garden displays enrich the collection.

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**EDITORS' NOTE:** This release announces an upcoming series of three **FREE community events at the Gardner Museum** in the Fenway – featuring local artists, authors and musicians from *Dorchester, Cambridge, West Roxbury & Boston*, and guests of all ages from these and other neighborhoods including the *Fenway, Brookline, Mission Hill, Jamaica Plain, Roxbury, Chinatown* and the *South End*.

This year's diverse line-up of programs will be of special interest to *Hispanic, African-American & Asian* audiences, as they focus on the history, art and cultures of these communities. Materials are available in Spanish, as well as English.

Reporters, photographers and film crews are encouraged to attend and cover these free, highly-visual community events. Artists, performers and guests are available for advance and/or at-event interviews by request. Free parking can be arranged by the Gardner Museum for members of the media.

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