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Beaver Island Cultural Arts Association
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Baroque on Beaver Festival 14th Year Ends on High Note

Pure Michigan Event – *attracts nearly 2000 to Beaver Island's classical music festival*

Following 10 days of jazz, classical and choral music, the annual Baroque on Beaver Festival ended on a very upbeat note. The festival, held on Beaver Island in Northern Lake Michigan, was a resounding success featuring 12 different programs and multiple pop-up performances, including one aboard a tugboat, and over 70 Michigan musicians and singers. This Pure Michigan event on America's 4th coast, celebrated its 14th consecutive season in 2015.

"The Festival took another leap forward this year under the direction of Music Director Robert Nordling and Choral Director Kevin Simons. We consistently heard rave reviews from patrons, staff, volunteers, and artists alike about the performance quality of our choral and orchestral forces. Having musicians and audience alike so inspired by the experience of live classical music is immensely rewarding to everyone involved," said Anne Glendon, board chair of the Beaver Island Cultural Arts Association, which oversees Baroque.

Maestro Robert Nordling, Music Director and Principle Conductor added, "We experienced many unforgettable moments during Baroque 2015 and one of my favorites was making our 'Bach and the Blues' concert a success. Having the Festival Orchestra play with the superb jazz trio of Paul Keller and Terry Lower and Pete Siers was sublime music-making we'll never forget."

Audience turnout was strong with more than 1,960 in attendance and sales of benefit tickets generated a \$3,500 increase over 2014. The Festival actually came up short with too little seating at several venues, chief among which was the program held at the CMU Biological Station. Seasonal residents on the Island have increasingly turned out in force for concerts held at the Biological station. The facilities are exceptional and they are conveniently located for many residents with homes on the east side and south end of the island. "The Board looks forward to working with CMU to resolve seating capacity challenges," said Frank D'Andraia, BICAA Chair-elect.

In honor of the founding organizers of Baroque on Beaver, the choral recital held at the Episcopal Mission was renamed the "Founders Concert," and the program was standing room only for the second consecutive year. Glendon said, "It seems like only yesterday that a small band of music makers gathered at the log cabin chapel of St. James Episcopal Mission to perform the music of J.S. Bach. The BICAA Board is pleased to honor the commitment and foresight of such individuals as Jane Maher, Ruth Kelly, Jeanne Howell, Joe Moore, Krys Lyle, and many others. The Board was unanimous in its decision to dedicate this program in perpetuity to this unique band of music lovers who made such a difference for the arts on Beaver Island."

Other highlights to this year's Festival include:

- For the second consecutive year the jazz trio kicked off the Festival with pianist Terry Lower, drummer Pete Siers, and bassist Paul Keller headlining on opening night and performing with principals of the Baroque orchestra the second night
- Families enjoyed a special afternoon of educational, interactive fun with the Baroque of Beaver Festival Orchestra at the Beaver Island Community School
- "Mosaics for Music Silent Auction " created and organized by Ellsworth resident Sylvia Harwood raised more than \$3500 to support Baroque musicians and added another cultural element to the Festival experience
- WVBI radio staffers Dennis Winslow and Maureen Abele provided Festival-goers with frequent updates on Baroque programming and several live interviews
- BIBCO in conjunction with BICCA offered ferry/festival packages and this initiative generated over \$800 in sales
- Promotion of Maestro Robert Nordling to Music Director and Principle Conductor and the return from sabbatical leave of Choral Director Kevin Simons solidified the Festival's artistic leadership
- At least 50 new people came to the Island specifically for the Festival and have already made plans for next year

"Everything came together this year to create the strongest sense of community we've seen at the Festival," said Anne Glendon. "At each of the twelve scheduled events and pop-up performances, more people than ever gathered to listen to our music makers and engage with artists and each other in our beautiful Island setting. The Board takes pride in creating an environment that allows the arts to be performed, enjoyed, and appreciated. We look forward to BICAA's collaboration with the Beaver Island Community Center for the first ever Jazz Festival on August 14 and 15, and hope it will be equally successful."

The Baroque on Beaver Festival's success can also be attributed to more than 75 volunteers and many Baroque sponsors, including Beaver Island Boat Company; Central Michigan University; Charlevoix Area Hospital; Charlevoix State Bank; Fresh Air Aviation; E. J. Hodgson Enterprises; Island Airways; McDonough's Market/Dalwhinnie's Bakery; St. James Marine and Fogg Towing; SpartanNash Corporation; William Hill Estate Winery. The Festival also enjoys support from such well-established funders as the Charlevoix County Community Foundation; Michigan Council for the Arts and Cultural Affairs; National Endowment for the Arts; and more than 60 program advertisers. BICAA is especially grateful to the many individuals whose personal and in-kind contributions and freewill gifts keep the music playing while maintaining the Festival's tradition of open admission for all classical concerts.

Dates for the 2016 Baroque on Beaver Festival are July 29 through August 7, and will not conflict with either Museum Week or Homecoming. For more information about Baroque on Beaver, please see: <http://www.baroqueonbeaver.org/> or by calling 888-511-5189 or e-mailing Info@BaroqueOnBeaver.org.

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