



Young Audiences Western New York

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Beats & Brews: All-Star Artists Perform to Support Arts Education

BUFFALO, NY (4/26/11) – All-Star folk-rock musicians, John & Mary and the Valkyries will headline a benefit concert to support Young Audiences of Western New York, the region's leading arts-education provider. The event, titled *Beats & Brews*, will be hosted at Sportsmen's Tavern at 326 Amherst Street in Buffalo on Saturday, May 7. Beginning at 8:30 p.m., *Beats & Brews* will include opening performances by award winning artists.

The artists featured at *Beats & Brews* are Young Audiences WNY teaching artists, working extensively in schools, after school venues, and community locations to engage children in creative learning through the arts. Young Audiences' programming supports core curriculum topics – like science, math, and social studies – and is designed to build 21st century life skills like problem-solving, collaboration, and self awareness. The organization's extensive programming ranges from individual assembly performances to in-depth multiyear residencies in the classroom.

"In 2010 we served over 60,000 young people. This year, due to cultural and educational funding cuts, our fundraising events and individual donors have taken on a more significant role in helping us to maintain and grow the number of children that we can serve," said Young Audiences WNY Executive Director Cynnie Gaasch. "This event is a fun and inexpensive way to learn more about our what we do for kids and help us to continue to bring high-quality artistic experiences into schools."

John Lombardo and Mary Ramsey, known as John & Mary, have recorded and toured since the 1980s, both on their own, as a folk-pop duo, and as members of 10,000 Maniacs. Lombardo is a songwriter, guitarist, singer; Ramsey sings, and plays the violin and viola. Together, they have performed around the world, and recorded tracks heard on 12 major label releases.

Rodney Appleby, an internationally touring Buffalo Music Hall of Fame Inductee, will emcee the festivities and provide musical support for opening performances by award-winning spoken word artists Annette Daniels-Taylor, Alex Mead, and Sherry Robbins.

Tickets and additional event details are available at www.yawny.org or by calling 716.881.0917. General admission tickets cost \$20 and are on-sale now. Proceeds will support bringing arts programs to children throughout the eight counties of Western New York.

Beats & Brews Supporting Artists:

- **Rodney Appleby:** musician, performer, composer, director and producer. Winner of the Buffalo Music Award for Best Bass Player in 1992-94. Inducted into the Buffalo Music Hall Of Fame in 1995.
- **Annette Daniels-Taylor:** playwright, poet, actor, and singer. Winner of the 2009 Artie's Emanuel Fried Award for New Play, *A Little Bit of Paradise*.
- **Alex Mead:** artist, author, and performer. Mead is a central member of Buffalo's Blood Thirsty Vegans and received the Artvoice Best of Buffalo Poet/Spoken Word Artist Award in 2009.
- **Sherry Robbins:** poet and published author. Robbins was named the New York State Teaching Artist of the Year for 2005 by the Association of Teaching Artists.

ABOUT YOUNG AUDIENCES: Young Audiences of Western New York is a not-for-profit arts-in-education organization whose mission is to make the visual, performing, and literary arts a part of young people's lives in order to enhance their development as creative and productive human beings. This mission is fulfilled every day within the eight counties of Western New York with performances, workshops, and residencies in educational, cultural, and community centers. Visit www.yawny.org for more information about Young Audiences of Western New York.