

## Glass Music of Eric and Susan Scites

Since 1999, Eric and Susan Scites have been entertaining audiences with their musical abilities on the Glass Harps. With their unique sound, broad appeal to audiences young and old, the sounds of Mozart's Adagio, Bach's Arioso, even favorites of Americana such as "Shenandoah" or "I'm Going Away" are sure to please anyone, anywhere.

### *A History of Glass*

Since the 5<sup>th</sup> century in Persia, glass has been used to produce music. In the 15<sup>th</sup> Century, it found its way into the Churches of France by filling glasses with water and tapping them. By the 16<sup>th</sup> Century, a moistened finger was used to produce an ethereal sound believed to have been the sound of the Angels. One French priest commented that if this was..."truly the sounds of the Angels in Heaven, I thank God my place is secure!"

Benjamin Franklin will hear a street entertainer performing on a set in Scotland in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, and re-configure it into his spindle-controlled Glass Armonica.



By the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the glasses had fallen out of favor, but still appeared in America in side-shows, circuses and performances, often times being referred to as the "Ghost Fiddle".

The history of the glasses is as strange as its American name suggests. It was thought to be the sound of Angels, to be a cursed instrument, and praised as a cure-all.

Though the instrument itself is simply nothing more than glasses filled with water and the sound heavenly, it was said that the purity of the tone was such that the players themselves would, over time, go mad from the sound boring into their brain.



It was accused of causing marital discourse, feminine complaints, stomachache, headache, insanity, even death. It was also claimed to HEAL marital discourse, feminine complaints, stomachache, headache, insanity, (but not death).

Mozart will write an Adagio for glassarmonica and string quartet, Donizetti will use it in the mad scene of his opera "Lucia D'lamamour", even

Dr. Mesmer will use it in his early works on hypnotism. So sit back, relax and enjoy the sounds of this unique instrument.

### **Partial Repertoire**

#### **Classical:**

Bach.	Minuet in G Jesu Joy of Man's Desire Arioso Air on a G string
Mozart	Adagio and Rondo in Cm
Purcell	Minuet in D
Beethoven	Ode to Joy Fur Elise
Pachelbel	Canon in D

#### **Americana and Folk:**

Shenandoah  
I'm Going Away  
Danny Boy  
Wayfaring Stranger  
Friendly Beasts  
Tenting Tonight

#### **American Hymns:**

Amazing Grace  
Fairest Lord Jesus  
It Is Well  
Be Still My Soul  
Nearer Still Nearer

#### **Christmas:**

Away in a Manger  
Up Good Christian Folk and Listen  
Silent Night  
Stille, Stille, Stille  
I Heard the Bells  
It Came Upon a Midnight Clear



Daniel Melograna/News Journal

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## **Music with a touch of glass**

### **Library offers unique listening experience**

**Eric Paul and Susan Scites play the glass harp at Mansfield/Richland County Public Library on Sunday.**

MANSFIELD -- As the haunting melody filled the second floor of the Mansfield/Richland County Public Library, Alex DiCesare seemed enthralled by the glass harp.

Her 11-month-old loves music, mom Kelli DiCesare said. She came to the library from her home in Lexington to learn about the history of music, as Eric Paul Scites and wife, Susan, performed music from the 15th through early 19th centuries.

"It's a nice Sunday afternoon thing," Kelli DiCesare said. "I like to learn about the history of music. Any type of music is

wonderful."

About 36 people listened to the January Fanfare performers, Faire Wynds. Other programs will follow each Sunday at 2 p.m. in January.

Eric Scites said he and his wife plan to hit the road in the next three weeks from their home in Hilliard to perform at historical sites, museums, churches and schools. With a degree in music, he said he enjoyed learning about the history of each instrument from the recorder, or English flute, to the laotua, an early form of the lute.

The glass harp was a popular instrument in olden days. Eric and Susan Scites recreated the instrument by using brandy glasses filled with a mixture of water and vinegar to make eerie music.

"We want to introduce people to another side of music," he said. "It gives them a chance to stop and think."

As the audience listened to Bach or "Greensleeves," the duo worked to bring each instrument to life. The Phillips family of Ontario were on hand to learn a little something about the instruments of history.

Bob and Cindy Phillips brought their 10-year-old son, Joey, who plays drums and bells and played the recorder in school.

"Our son is in the band and I was in the band," Cindy Phillips said. "I thought it would be interesting if he saw something different."

Joey wanted to go home and try out the glass harp.

"It's weird how when you touch the top of the glass, it makes a sound," he said.

As the couple borrowed books and videos from the library, they said they may come out again for "January Fanfare."

## **CONTACT INFORMATION:**

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