

MYA International Concert Tour: 20 Days, 15 Concerts, 2 Embassies

Everything Else...Priceless

100 young musicians from Midwest Young Artists (MYA 878 Lyster Road, Highwood, IL 847-926-9898) embarked on a 20-day concert tour this July to the historical countries of Spain and Portugal. MYA's ambassadors performed more than 15 concerts for standing ovations at venues including the US Embassies in Spain and Portugal, the Palace of La Granja in Segovia and the International Piano Festival in Lucena. Students also had the rare opportunity to meet the Ambassador to Spain from the U.S., Eduardo Aguirre Jr., and the Iraqi Ambassador to Spain, Talal Al-Khudairi. Michael Fatum, a trumpeter and sophomore at New Trier High School, comments. "At the end of our third concert, the crowd gave us an overwhelming standing ovation and when we played the last part of Carmen (the opera) as an encore they clapped along. To be able to stand up in front of more than 350 people who don't even speak your language and get a bone chilling applause is an experience that I will treasure forever. Since that concert we tended to receive the same warm welcome everywhere else. It is because music is a universal language that everyone can understand and enjoy."

Dr. Allan Dennis, Director of Midwest Young Artists, reflects on his experience overseas. "As a "family" traveling together, everyone has grown to appreciate and

celebrate each other. New friendships have been established and old friendships have been enriched. Even more importantly, we have had positive interactions with the people of Spain and, in all I have seen, these interactions have put a positive "face" on the U.S."

Proudly representing 27 communities and three states, students visited the culturally rich cities of Barcelona, Valencia, Lisbon, Granada, Segovia, and Salamanca. Tour stops included the captivating Alhambra in Granada, Salamanca's Plaza Mayor and Madrid's famous art gallery, The Prado.

Midwest Young Artists (878 Lyster Road, Highwood, IL, 847-926-9898), is the leading youth-music ensemble program in the Midwest. Founded in 1993 by Dr. Allan Dennis with one orchestra, MYA has grown into a full-curriculum music school with a distinguished faculty of 22. Presently, MYA has five youth orchestras, more than 50 chamber music ensembles, three vocal ensembles, an all-inclusive jazz program, as well as classes in music theory and history. The program is for serious young musicians and dedicated amateurs. MYA is housed in its own state-of-the-art facility in the town of Fort Sheridan, which provides its students with large rehearsal halls, classrooms, a recording studio, and music library. MYA graduates are accepted at the most selective conservatories in the country.