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Arts to converge on park

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The Providence Journal-Bulletin

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**NOTEWORTHY:**

The chamber music ensemble Aequalis performs Sunday at Roger Williams Park's Temple to Music as part of the Convergence III Arts Festival.

Arts to converge on park

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Sixty artists and musicians and their sculpture, dance, theater and music will turn the park into a giant stage and art gallery — from the Rose Garden to the Temple to Music, the Japanese Garden to the children's play area near the park carousel.

Storyteller Marc Levitt has prepared a major piece called *Triple-decker*.

Set in an imagined tenement house in South Providence, Levitt's tale focuses on six immigrant groups who lived there from 1910 to the present. He examines how they changed "as a result of their relationships to the United States and to each other . . . and how they changed the United States."

The six groups are Cape Verdeans, Armenians, African-Americans, Irish-Americans, Cambodians, and immigrants from the Dominican Republic.

There were reasons Levitt chose those groups: "Either they had a very prominent place as first- or second-generation immigrants from 1910 on . . . or I had musicians that I could find."

Music will be an important part of Levitt's narration. It will be backed by RICE, Rhode Island Convergence Ensemble, featuring musi-

cians performing an Armenian oud, an African talking drum, Cape Verdean guitar, Irish pipes, Cambodian xylophone and an accordian from the Dominican Republic.

Levitt sees the music as being symbolic of the fusion of cultures. "(In the) same way that, perhaps, people on the second floor would go to the people on the first floor and jam with them. Or how all the musicians formed an American sound."

"On some level," he says, "it's going to be a mini-epic of the immigration process in the United States and how we as a culture are evolving a new kind of cultural expression based on the fusion of elements of one culture to another."

Sen. Jesse Helms of North Carolina, who helped trigger the controversy over funding for the National Endowment for the Arts, will be remembered by two performing groups.

The Awareness Theatre, a Providence political theater group, will use the metaphor of child's play on a playground to demonstrate the process of NEA restrictions on artists. And Meatballs/Fluxus, a nine-member Providence ensemble, will perform a 90-minute tribute to the American picnic that ends with a special tribute to the senator.

A partial list of performers, and their work, include:

Triple-decker, *Marc Levitt's piece, will be performed in the Rose Garden Saturday at 12:30 p.m.*

The folk music of Barbara Schloff, the Rose Garden, 2:30 p.m., John Fuzek and Mary Ann Rossoni, 3:30 p.m. Saturday.

Greg Abate and Diamond, "The Lizard Brothers," the Rose Garden, 5 p.m. Saturday.

Mobius, Sunday, 2 p.m. to 4 p.m., various locations in the park.

Awareness Theatre, Saturday 1:30 p.m. and Sunday 3:30 p.m., in the Children's Play Area next to the Park Carousel.

Ramona Bass and Valerie Tutson, Elmwood Avenue entrance, Saturday 2 p.m. and Sunday 3 p.m.

Aequalis, chamber music, Sunday 5 p.m., Temple to Music.

Nikila Cole, choreographer and dancer, Sunday 1:30 p.m. and 4 p.m., the Japanese Garden.

Orange then Blue, jazz, Temple to Music, Sunday at 2 p.m.

Meatballs/Fluxus, Saturday 7 p.m., the Rose Garden, Sunday noon at the Temple to Music.

Art Moves, Temple to Music Field Saturday, 3, 3:30, 4, 4:30, 5, 5:30 p.m. and Sunday, 1, 1:30, 3:30, 4, 4:30, 5 p.m.

Massai, reggae, at the Temple to Music Sunday at 8 p.m.

For more information, call 785-9450.

Art converges on the park

By **JIM SEAVOR**
Journal-Bulletin Arts Writer

IF YOU'RE AT Roger Williams Park this weekend and people ask "Are you round?" relax, it's not the latest cocktail come-on.

They're just playing along with the Mobius performing group, which is doing a performance-scavenger hunt called *What's a round* as part of the Convergence III arts festival. The festival takes

over the park from noon to 9 p.m. tomorrow and Sunday.

"It's a regional fine arts festival," says Bob Rizzo, director of public programming at Roger Williams Park. "People think it's a new age festival, but it's not. The basic concept is to present unique public sculpture in a parks setting. The 'convergence' angle is all art forms converging in one location."

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