



**World Foundation for Music and Healing**  
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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**World Foundation for Music and Healing launches "Feel the Music!"  
A new, interactive music program for children and teens who lost a parent  
or close family member on September 11, 2001**

(September 23, 2005, New York, NY)—A gathering of renowned professional musicians will spend the afternoon this **Sunday, September 25, 2005 from 1 pm to 4 pm** helping the children and teenagers of victims of the September 11 terrorist attacks ***Feel the Music!***

Designed to be fun and inspiring, the event at Tinker Auditorium, located at 55 East 59th Street (Park & Madison) in Manhattan, kicks off ***Feel the Music!*** a new program which provides free, age-appropriate, interactive music workshops in songwriting, percussion, singing and jazz to children and teens still working through their personal losses. No musical experience is required.

"*Feel the Music!* is designed to assist in the emotional recovery of children who lost a parent or close family member on that day. Our program allows children to create music, thereby building resilience and providing an opportunity for children to experience joy," said *Feel the Music!* Program Director and Founder Valerie Ghent. "Music reaches places for which we have no words. Through songwriting and singing, percussion and improvisation, *Feel the Music!* can help provide a musical vocabulary for creative self-expression."

Beginning at 1 p.m., **Beth & Scott and Friends** will present "Rhythm and Rhyme, Interactive Music Making", at 2 p.m., **Roy Nathanson** (co-founder of The Jazz Passengers) will help children "Make Your Own Song," while at 3 p.m. Lincoln Center Afro-Latin Jazz Orchestra Music Director and pianist **Arturo O'Farrill**, percussionist **Bashiri Johnson** (Whitney Houston, Celine Dion) will perform and invite children to join in.

The *Feel the Music!* workshops, starting in October 2005, are taught by professional musicians who love teaching. All workshops will be held on weekends and after-school and are centrally located in Manhattan at Saint Peter's Church/Midtown Arts Common (54th St. and Lexington Avenue). In addition to the regularly scheduled workshops for children and teens, the program provides wellness groups and informational meetings for adult caregivers.

*Feel the Music!* was created by The World Foundation for Music and Healing and its partners, **Friendship Ambassadors Foundation, Lincoln Center Afro-Latin Jazz Orchestra Music Director Arturo O'Farrill, NYU's Postdoctoral Program in Psychotherapy and Psychoanalysis, Tuesday's Children, September 11th Families' Association, Saint Peter's Church** and **Rhythm Healing**. This program is supported in large part with funding by a September 11 recovery grant from the American Red Cross Liberty Disaster Relief Fund.

For a comprehensive description of the workshops and the upcoming schedule, please visit [www.musicandhealing.org](http://www.musicandhealing.org) or call (212)669-6126.

### **About the World Foundation for Music and Healing**

The World Foundation for Music and Healing was founded by NYU graduate and musician/singer-songwriter Valerie Ghent in response to the evolving needs of children who lost a parent on September 11th. In the weeks and months after September 11<sup>th</sup>, Valerie, a native downtown New Yorker, became one of the many volunteers at World Trade Center site.

While distributing much needed, specific supplies with the organization WTC Ground Zero Relief, Valerie also organized benefit concerts with members of the FDNY, PAPD, NYPD and WTC volunteers she met at the WTC site. She invited local New York musicians and poets who had written songs or poems about September 11th to participate in the concerts, one of which included a reading of Lou Reed's poem by Steve Buscemi.

These sold-out 9/11 concerts evolved into the acclaimed benefit CD "We'll Carry On" a book of poetry and lyrics titled "Word" an ongoing concert series and, most importantly, planted the first seeds of what would become *Feel the Music!*, a music healing program for children and teens who lost a parent on September 11th.

To actualize *Feel the Music!*, Valerie began to conceive of the World Foundation for Music and Healing (WFMH), an organization which would bring together music, healing and creative expression under one roof. Being the founder/director of The Songwriter's Beat and West Street Records, and having spent over twenty years writing, performing, recording, engineering and producing music with some of the top names in the music industry - including **Ashford & Simpson, Dr. Maya Angelou, Nina Simone, Roberta Flack, and Deborah Harry** - Valerie knew first hand the power of music to transform audiences and participants alike.

Calling on contacts within the music industry Valerie located partners for the WFMH including pianist-composer Arturo O'Farrill, Lincoln Center's Afro-Latin Jazz Orchestra Musical Director; and percussionist Bashiri Johnson, who started Rhythm

Healing, among others. She then contacted the NYU Postdoctoral Program in Psychotherapy and Psychoanalysis, a highly respected advanced training program which Valerie's father, Emmanuel Ghent, co-founded over forty years before.

Simultaneously Valerie conferred closely with The September 11th Families' Association and Tuesday's Children, another family group dedicated to the children affected by 9/11. As a member of The Children's Music Network, a national nonprofit dedicated to celebrating the positive power of music in children's lives, Valerie was able to consult with children's music composers and educators. The final key fell into place with Friendship Ambassadors Foundation, a nonprofit affiliated with the United Nations, who offered to become the fiscal agent for the World Foundation for Music and Healing and provide administrative, financial and logistical support.

In collaboration with these partners, and encouraged by the 9/11 family groups, the World Foundation for Music and Healing designed the interactive music education program, *Feel the Music!*, featuring age appropriate workshops in percussion, singing, songwriting, jazz and a variety of concerts.

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