



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Date: 07-09-08

Contact: Jennifer White

Tel: 603.595.9156

Email: [jennifer@nashuasymphony.org](mailto:jennifer@nashuasymphony.org)

## **Nashua Symphony Association's Presents Ripple Effect 2008-2009**

This past spring, Nashua High North students enrolled in Sarah Bucken's Creative Writing class reached a milestone of sorts: they completed their part of this year's *Ripple Effect* poetry-art-music cycle. Phase I of the project involves these student writers in a journey of discovery that will eventually lead their poetry to be sung by their own High School Choirs and the Nashua Symphony Chorus.

"We started *The Ripple Effect* in the spring of 2006 and I'm pleased to see it moving into its third cycle this season," noted Nashua Symphony Association Executive Director Eric Valliere.

This year's *Ripple Effect* will be different from the first two for several reasons. Thematically, the student poems aren't linked to any particular piece of music. Rather, their subject was suggested by the project's composer Kevin Siegfried – who returns after participating in both of the two previous cycles.

"Kevin had a few requests," said Valliere. "First, he asked whether the poets could focus on the idea of the changing environment, since that's a subject close to his heart and one he has wanted to address through music. Second, he wanted his new piece to be performed alongside his two previous *Ripple Effect* compositions as a kind of triptych. Both felt like good ideas to me."

The next step was for Valliere to renew the project's association with former NH Poet Laureate Marie Harris, who lead the poetry workshops for Cycle 1. Harris was eager to sign on and to begin her work with the students and NHS North creative writing teacher Sarah Bucken.

"The students and I devoted four full days to the consideration of the state of our environment and how best to express our concerns in poetry," Harris explained. "One of our workshops took place at the NH Audubon Society's McLane Center, a pioneering green building that incorporates approaches and solutions to many of the issues that are involved in good stewardship of our planet. After a series of animated and opinionated conversations we began drafting poems. We read them aloud and commented on them. We revised and re-wrote until finally we were satisfied with the results. It has been an exciting process and I am deeply honored to have been part of it."

Now that the student poems are complete, they are treated to new interpretations. Siegfried, of course, will choose phrases from the poetry to set to music. High School art students will begin in the fall to interpret the poems visually. And, new this year, the Nashua Area Art Association is sending out a "call for artists" to participate in a juried show this fall, the art for which will also be in response to the student poetry (for details, area artists can visit the NAAA's website).

"One of my goals early on for the *Ripple Effect* was to involve students in the creation and performance of the new musical works," Valliere added. "This year, I am thrilled that the select Concert Choirs from Nashua High North and South will workshop the new piece with the composer as it's being created in the fall. Then, they'll join the Nashua Symphony Chorus and string orchestra for the performance on March 14, 2009."

"All of us at the NSA are very proud of this program, and we're extremely grateful for the support of Nashua's high schools and the opportunity to work with poets, composers and teachers like Marie, Kevin and Sarah," concluded Valliere. "Nashua is a special place and deserves unique programs like this; now that the NAAA is also participating, there's no telling how far these ripples might reach."