

A History of Playing for Peace™

Central to Apple Hill's mission is *Playing for Peace*™, a program dedicated to using music as a tool for conflict resolution. By definition, chamber music is a democratic process. Because there is no conductor, players must connect effectively – verbally and non-verbally – to achieve a common musical goal. These skills open the door to other levels of communication. Music's capacity to bring together people of diverse backgrounds to bridge differences and enhance global awareness is the foundation of the *Playing for Peace*™ philosophy.

How does *Playing for Peace*™ work? During the regular concert season, members of the Apple Hill String Quartet tour worldwide, performing concerts, conducting master classes and workshops, and awarding scholarships to musicians of conflicting cultures. These students then attend the Summer Chamber Music Workshop held annually on the Apple Hill campus in Nelson, New Hampshire.

The *Playing for Peace*™ initiative began in 1988, when the Apple Hill String Quartet toured Israel under the auspices of the U.S. State Department and Embassy in Israel. While on tour, they awarded Apple Hill scholarships to Israeli-Jewish and Israeli-Palestinian musicians. The following summer, these participants became friends and honed their music skills at the Summer Chamber Music Workshop, where they were placed together in ensembles and coached by the Apple Hill String Quartet and guest faculty.

Due to its success, *Playing for Peace*™ soon expanded to include other countries, including Jordan, Egypt, and Syria. Filmmaker Peter Rosen accompanied the Players on their 1992 tour and made the acclaimed documentary "Playing for Peace," which was broadcasted nationally on PBS. The film tells the story of the tour and the experiences of Israeli and Arab students at Apple Hill. Since then, tours have expanded to include such places as Palestine/West Bank, China, Northern Ireland and Republic of Ireland, England, Greek and Turkish Communities of Cyprus, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia, Burma, Malaysia, and Vietnam.

In 2000, the Apple Hill concert in Beirut, Lebanon



Summer Chamber Music Workshop participants from Dallas

was the first cultural event presented by the U.S. Embassy in twenty years. The 2004 Apple Hill concert in Algiers was a watershed event – the first public concert since the 1992 Civil War.

Due to the success of the international *Playing for Peace*™ program, a domestic *Playing for Peace*™ initiative was established to bring participants from rural and urban United States communities to Apple Hill. Through scholarship programs in Massachusetts, Texas, Tennessee, and California, Apple Hill extends musical coaching and mentorship to inner-city minority youth. Scholarships are funded by a combination of tuition, individual contributions, and foundation grants.

In 2005, Apple Hill received a two-year grant from the U.S. Department of State to improve conflict resolution through the *Playing for Peace*™ program in the Caucasus Region – Azerbaijan, and the Republic of Georgia – and in Russia, Cyprus, Turkey, Jordan, Malaysia, Vietnam and Burma.

In November of 2007, the Apple Hill String Quartet toured Israel and the West Bank. Their workshop in Nazareth was the first time Israeli-Jewish and Israel-Arab students had played together since 1998. In December, they traveled to England, Northern Ireland, and Republic of Ireland. In both locations, the string quartet performed with *Playing for Peace*™ alumni.

After twenty years, many early participants are now using the *Playing for Peace*™ model in their countries, and a new generation of students is discovering Apple Hill.