

The Asian Arts & Culture Program at UMass Amherst Fine Arts Center

CONTACT: Sue McFarland, 413-577-2486 (aacp@acad.umass.edu)
WHAT: The River's Song: Celebrating the Connecticut River
WHEN: May 16, 2015
HOURS: 11 a.m. to 9 p.m.
WHERE: Great Falls Discovery Center, 2 Avenue A, and other locations in Turners Falls, MA

Celebrate the Connecticut River with a day of FREE Activities in Turners Falls MA!

On Saturday, May 16, downtown Turners Falls, MA is the site for a full day of free activities focused on the environment and art inspired by the Connecticut River. Coordinated by the UMass Fine Arts Center Asian Arts and Culture Program along with Turners Falls RiverCulture, the Connecticut River Watershed Council and the Great Falls Discovery Center, this collaborative event includes activities from both environmental and historic nonprofits and individual artists. Some highlights of The River's Song include Avenue A storefronts with video installations created by Chinese artists sponsored by the Millers Falls Arts Bridge, an original soundscape of the Connecticut River water cycle by percussionist and composer Tony Vacca presented at the Shea Theater, and an opportunity to make art with staff from The Arts Garden and march in a River Parade at 3 p.m.

The Nolumbeka Project, a non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation of the history of Native Americans/American Indians of New England, opens the River Song event with a commemorative ceremony on the banks of the river at Unity Park and drumming by Visioning Bear Circle. Additional daytime events include story hours by The Connecticut River Watershed Council, River Stories in Poetry and Song-a spoken word event with David Brule and a host of interactive environmental activities sponsored by the Great Falls Discovery Center and RiverSmart Communities (including a "bugquarium" full of tiny river invertebrates!)

After 5 p.m. join members of the Nolumbeka Project for a walking tour of historic Native American sites along the river and attend a reception for the Trash to Treasure Art Exhibit artists in the Great Hall of the Great Falls Discovery Center. At dusk, the day concludes with a Water Dance, a sound and light performance using illuminated hoola hoops. This art event is co-created with volunteers from the community and local Conway artist Phyllis Labanowski with drummer Ricardo Frota. The River's Song celebration is a rain or shine event. All events are free and open to the public. For a full schedule of events or for more information please see: fineartscenter.com or turnersfallsriverculture.org or by calling 413-577-2486.

The River's Song Project Celebration is a collaborative effort between the UMass Fine Arts Center Asian Arts and Culture Program, the Connecticut River Watershed Council (CRWC), Turners Falls RiverCulture, the Great Falls Discovery Center, US Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Wildlife

Refuge System, the Nolumbeka Project, the Shelburne Falls Art Garden, Millers Falls Arts Bridge, RiverSmart Communities, Massachusetts Cultural Council and the UMass Departments of Landscape Architecture and Regional Planning and Education.

For more background information about the project please see: fineartscenter.com.

For images see: <https://fac.umass.edu/Online/PressImages>

###END###

The River's Song, Saturday, May 16 Full Schedule of Events

ALL DAY Storefront Video Installations along Avenue A, Turners Falls by the Millers Falls Arts Bridge Artists

9am-5pm Turners Falls Fish Ladder, First St and Unity Park

10-4 pm Great Falls Discovery Center Environmental Exhibits, 2 Avenue A, Turners Falls MA

11:00am - 3:00 pm: Kid's Art Making Activities: The Art Garden under the tent at Great Falls Discovery Center, 2 Avenue A

11:00am -3:00 pm Connecticut River Watershed Council presents children's story time of "The Fish in the Polka Dot Dress" (every hour on the hour) and learn about rivers with a hands-on water table, Great Falls Discovery Center, 2 Avenue A

1:00-1:30pm Reconciliation Commemoration Ceremony with the Nolumbeka Project at The River Tent, Unity Park

1:30-2:30pm: Visioning Bear Drumming, The River Tent, Unity Park

2:30-3:00 pm River Stories in Poetry and Song with David Brule, The Nolumbeka Project, The River Tent, Unity Park

3:00pm: The River Parade - Gather at the Art Garden Tent at Great Falls Discovery Center, 2 Avenue A

4:00pm: The River's Song Soundscape performance with Tony Vacca at the Shea Theater, 71 Avenue A

5:30-7:00 pm Historic Native American Sites Walking Tour with David Brule and Joe Graveline of the Nolumbeka Project, gather at Great Falls Discovery Center, 2 Avenue A

6:30-8:00pm: Meet the Artist: Trash to Treasure reception in the Great Hall, Great Falls Discovery Center, 2 Avenue A

8:30pm: Gathering begins for Water Dance: Sound and Light Performance at the Iron Bridge behind Great Falls Discovery Center, 2 Avenue A

8:45pm: WaterDance with Phyllis Labanowski, Ricardo Frota and volunteers around the Iron Bridge