

CAPE ANN Museum

100 Voices: Our Collective Story – Immersive public art of light and sound highlighting local immigration history

Artist Stephanie Benenson's Harbor Voices creates immersive family-friendly experience at Cape Ann Museum Green: May 12-14 and 19-21



Image from the artwork "Im | Migration," 2019. Light & sound in public space. Created by artist Stephanie Benenson, Punto Urban Art Museum, and the Point Neighborhood of Salem MA

GLOUCESTER, MASS. (May 2023) – [100 Voices: Our Collective Story](#), by local artist Stephanie Benenson, brings the stories and sentiments of immigrant families alive with spoken word, and laser lighting for a captivating, participatory immersive experience. Presented by [Cape Ann Museum](#) and the [CAM Teen Council](#), the exhibition is a work of light and sound by Harbor Voices that was created with community voices at senior centers, the offices of public officials, public schools, nonprofit groups, and historical societies. Storytellers were invited to share in any language, resulting in a multilingual, inclusive presentation that shares a wide range of global immigration perspectives. The exhibition will be on display at the Cape Ann Museum Green Campus from May 12 – 14 and May 19 – 21, 2023. Free viewing hours are 10:00 am-5:00 pm on Friday and Saturday and 1:00-4:00 pm on Sunday.

"100 Voices: Our Collective Story is a unique, highly relevant and powerful piece of art that really resonates with the community on Cape Ann," said Oliver Barker, the Museum's Director. "We are

honored to be able to share the exhibition with the public and our members during the Gloucester 400+ anniversary and are inspired by the work Stephanie is doing to illuminate and bring to the fore all voices so central to this community.”

In the Janet & William Ellery James Center, an eight-minute show featuring a “babble” of languages overlapping into the sound of crashing waves is played on loop. Visitors can walk in at any moment and stay as long as they like. The sound installation immerses exhibition visitors in local stories while lasers visualize the web of connectivity between stories. Lights from opposite corners of the room connect and travel through space and time together, exemplifying the similitudes that exist amongst community members. Each story, old or new, is represented by a beam of light.

"Research demonstrates extraordinary benefits from feeling connected to the progression of local history and the stories of our elders" said artist, Stephanie Benenson. "These global perspectives celebrate our diverse harbor, the waves of people that built it, and the future voices that carry it forward."

The works celebrate empathy, cultural identity, diversity, inclusivity, and resilience from the past to the present. The stories and experience then become a vehicle for social change. Her installations have been shared in Lynn, Worcester, Boston, Gloucester, Salem, and New York City.

Inspired by collective storytelling and powerful personal histories, [Stephanie Benenson](#), a sound, light, and social impact artist, founded [Harbor Voices Public Art](#) in 2017. Her laser and sound installations feature global stories of recent and ancestral immigrants to Cape Ann, ages 6 to 86, as choreographed lasers immerse you in a multilingual sound & light public art experience.

"It's been great to learn about the different ways that our community can be woven together into such a unique art project," shared CAM Teen Council member Evelyn Porter.

The Museum is offering free one hour school and group trips, which include a private artist led tour and conversation about the possibility of social impact through public art. Students grades 4 – 12 can embark on a guided art experience as well to learn about the diverse stories of Cape Ann and explore connections between ancestral and recent local immigration, migration, and origin stories shares in a multigenerational presentation heard in multiple languages with a wide range of global immigration perspectives. Educators are also offered the opportunity to experience the art for free, with timed 60-minute sessions.

To schedule a group visit, email: education@capeannmuseum.org

To learn more about the exhibit, visit the Museum's [website](#).

The Cape Ann Museum, founded in 1875, exists to preserve and celebrate the history and culture of the area and to keep it relevant to today's audiences. Spanning 44,000 square feet, the Museum is one of the major cultural institutions on Boston's North Shore welcoming more than 25,000 local, national, and international visitors each year to its exhibitions and programs. In addition to fine art, the Museum's collections include decorative art, textiles, artifacts from the maritime and granite industries, three historic homes, a Library & Archives and a sculpture park in the heart of downtown Gloucester. In Summer 2021, the Museum opened the 12,000 square foot Janet & William Ellery James Center at the [Cape Ann Museum Green](#). The campus also includes three historic

buildings – the White-Ellery House (1710), the recently acquired Babson-Alling House (c.1740), and an adjacent Barn (c. 1740), all located on the site at the intersection of Washington and Poplar Streets in Gloucester. CAM Green will re-open in the spring.

The Cape Ann Museum is located at 27 Pleasant Street in Gloucester and is open Tuesday through Saturday, 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and Sunday, 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. Admission is \$15.00 adults, \$12.00 Cape Ann residents, seniors, and students. Youth (under 18) and Museum members are free. Cape Ann residents can visit for free on the second Saturday of each month. For more information please call (978)283-0455 x110 or visit www.capeannmuseum.org.

About Harbor Voices

Harbor Voices Public Art makes free community, collaborative, public audiovisual art exhibitions that focus on community storytelling as medium for conversations around social justice and the celebration of cultural diversity. Their participatory process has the ability to bring people together and impact the future.

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