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**CHARLES H. KAMAN FOUNDATION FUNDS 11<sup>TH</sup> SEASON OF BABY GRAND JAZZ AT HARTFORD PUBLIC LIBRARY**

**Hartford, Connecticut (October 22, 2013)** — Hartford Public Library is pleased to announce a grant from the Charles H. Kaman Foundation to fund the 11<sup>th</sup> season of Baby Grand Jazz. The Foundation also funded the 2012 and 2013 program. The popular, free series offers some of the best jazz performances in the Greater Hartford region. Sixteen concerts are scheduled on Sunday afternoons at 3:00 p.m. starting January 5, 2014 through and including April 27, 2014.

Meg Okura will open the Baby Grand Jazz series with a performance on Sunday, January 5 at 3:00 p.m. *All About Jazz* called her the “queen of chamber jazz,” Meg Okura balances her roles as violin virtuoso, prolific composer, and erhu player. She has won numerous grants and awards as a composer, and her credits as violinist and erhu player appear on over fifty albums and soundtracks with various artists from David Bowie, Dianne Reeves to Lee Konitz. Native of Tokyo, Meg Okura has toured all of Asia as concertmaster and soloist of the Asian Youth Orchestra. Hailed by the New York Times as “vibrant” and “sophisticated,” her Pan Asian Chamber Jazz Ensemble weaves together jazz, classical, and world music to create a unique blend of world-chamber jazz.

Hartford Public Library supports artistic excellence by engaging local communities in new and exciting ways through an array of inspiring artistic programs. Jazz, an American art form rooted in the democratic mix of individual and united effort, is the ideal soundtrack for Library CEO Matt Poland’s vision of the 21st Century public library as a gateway for all. With “Baby Grand Jazz” it’s a swinging gateway and get-away, free and accessible to one and all.

The Baby Grand Jazz series draws a large audience of city residents and out-of-towners to its Downtown Library. The 2013 series broke all attendance records, drawing nearly 5,000 concertgoers over the season. Baby Grand Jazz has become a weekly destination for hundreds of people, with the series often drawing crowds of 400 or more for each performance.

As a complement to the music series, the library will exhibit music-inspired works by prominent Hartford artists. Past artists included photographer Maurice Robertson and painter Andres Chaparro, both deeply committed champions of music.

About [Hartford Public Library](#)

The Hartford Public Library traces its roots to 1774. It operates 10 locations and a Library-on-Wheels in the City of Hartford. The Library receives more than 860,000 visits per year. Services include access to a large collection of materials for reading and research, as well as music and video. Programs provide education, information and enrichment to the people of Hartford in such areas as citizenship training, literacy, business skills and cultural awareness. The mission of Hartford Public Library is to provide free resources that inspire reading, guide learning, and encourage individual exploration. Visit [hplct.org](http://hplct.org) and the library's new blog at [blogs.hplct.org](http://blogs.hplct.org)

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