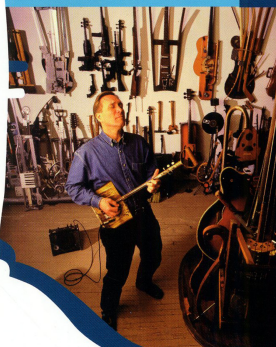


## {ABOUT THE ARTIST}

Ken Butler studied viola as a child and maintained an interest in music while studying visual arts in France, at Colorado College, and at Portland State University where he completed his MFA in painting in 1977. He has received fellowships from the Oregon Arts Commission, the



New York Foundation for the Arts, and the National Endowment for the Arts. Ken's works have been featured in numerous exhibitions and performances throughout the USA, Canada, and Europe including The Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam and Exit Art, Thread Waxing Space, The Kitchen, The Brooklyn Museum, Lincoln Center and The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City, as well as in galleries in South America, Thailand, and Japan. His works have been featured on PBS, CNN, MTV, and NBC, including a live appearance on *The Tonight Show*, and are represented in public and private collections in Portland, Seattle, Vail, Los Angeles, Toronto, Montreal, Washington D.C., and New York City, including the permanent collection of The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Ken has performed with John Zorn, Laurie Anderson, Butch Morris, The Soldier String Quartet, Matt Darriau's Paradox Trio, The Tonight Show Band, and The Master Gnawa musicians of Morocco. His CD *Voices of Anxious Objects* is on Zorn's *Tzadik* label.

## {CREDITS}

Kidspace is a collaborative project of the Sterling & Francine Clark Art Institute, Williams College Museum of Art, and MASS MoCA. Additional funding has been provided by grants from the National Endowment for the Arts (a federal agency); Massachusetts Cultural Council (a state agency); Brownrigg Charitable Trust in memory of Lynn Laitman; and Ruth E. Proud Charitable Trust. The Vermont Arts Council provided the Stamford School District with funding to support their involvement in Kidspace. Special funding for *The New Sound of Music* exhibition was received from Williams College's Howard Hughes Medical Institution grant.

*The New Sound of Music* was organized by Kidspace Director of Exhibitions and Education Laura Thompson with Kidspace Education Coordinator Angela Roberts and artist Ken Butler. The exhibit curriculum packet was designed in collaboration with Debbie Nowicki of Savoy Elementary School in Savoy, MA and Heidi Dugal of Abbott Memorial Elementary School in Florida, MA. Special thanks to the MASS MoCA staff for its continued significant role in planning, promoting, designing, and installing the exhibition.

All Photography by Kevin Kennerick

## {ARTIST STATEMENT}

My hybrid musical instrument sculptures, collage/drawings, performances, and audio-visual installations explore the interaction and transformation of objects, sounds, and altered images as function and form collide at the intersection of art and music. I re-invent objects in an attempt to reveal hidden meanings and associations, creating new cultural identities for common objects. String instruments become bodies, tools, toys, machines, creatures, sculptures, icons, and voices. Keyboards become "cybernetic architecture" where old and new materials are combined, and the keys activate things other than the sounds of the strings.

As we move to increased reliance on electrical machines, the churning mass of consumerism chews up and spits out common products with reassigned priorities and updates. Some materials of the past remain, untouched and relegated to the junkyard of unwanted resources. From this stockpile, I dismantle and reassemble objects into functional assemblages / groupings in the form of musical instruments / objects, then coax them to sing for their supper.

Image Titles {from opposite side}

1. {from left} *Framed Drawing Guitar*, 1990; *Books Red Constructivist*, 1992; *Chair Back Cut-Away Guitar*, 1994
2. ARTSHOP: students with their then in-progress mural, *Homage To Music*, 2006
3. *Projection Grand: An Incandescent Keyboard*, 2002

## {ABOUT KIDSPACE}

Kidspace is in its 6th year as a collaborative project of the Sterling & Francine Clark Art Institute, Williams College Museum

of Art, and MASS MoCA. Kidspace is a contemporary art gallery and art-making space for children, teachers, and families. School programs and educational materials are designed for elementary schools in North Adams, Florida, Clarksburg, and Savoy, Massachusetts, as well as Stamford, Vermont. Kidspace organizes an after-school artist mentor program for 6th - 10th graders in the North Adams and North Berkshire school districts. Working with Kidspace staff and artists, students and teachers learn new ways to connect contemporary art to their classroom activities and to their everyday lives.

The public is welcome at Kidspace to view exhibitions and to create their own art. During the school year, public hours are Saturdays and Sundays, noon to 4 pm, plus holiday hours. The rest of the week is reserved for school groups. Summer public hours begin June 26, when Kidspace will be open every day from noon to 4 pm through Labor Day. Admission to Kidspace is free. Public art classes and special workshops are offered during school breaks and the summer, and arrangements can be made to hold birthday parties in Kidspace.

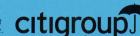
Please call Kidspace at (413) 664-4481 ext. 8131 for more details on hours, programs and program fees, and exhibitions. And check out the Kidspace web site at [www.massmoca.org/Kidspace](http://www.massmoca.org/Kidspace).



1032 MASS MoCA Way  
North Adams, MA 01247



MASS MoCA thanks Citigroup for its support including the printing of this brochure.



Kidspace at MASS MoCA presents:

March 30–September 4, 2006

*THE NEW SOUND  
OF MUSIC*  
Hybrid Instruments by Ken Butler





## I. {EXHIBITION OVERVIEW}

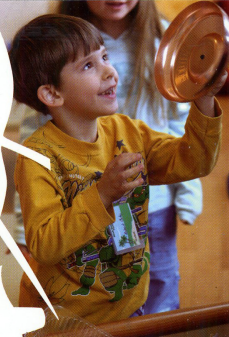
The *New Sound of Music* exhibit features hybrid musical instruments created by Ken Butler of Brooklyn, New York. Internationally recognized as an innovator of experimental sculptural instruments, Ken brings together a diversity of everyday materials including tools, sports equipment, and household objects. He has used boots for "violin" bodies, and turned floor mops and children's sleds into "cellos". He has meshed keyboards with recycled wire shelves and spotlights to create an interactive musical light show.

Ken's work explores the interaction and transformation of common objects, altered images, sounds and silence. He links objects that relate to each other visually and that suggest instruments, while the sounds they end up producing are by-products.

Ken has said his work has "an ergonomic relationship" to the body, meaning though they are made out of many protruding objects, he has taken into consideration how the instruments relate to a musician's body.

Also featured in the exhibit is a mural created by local students in grades 6 - 10 who participate in ArtSHOP, the Kidspace after-school art program. With artist/mentor and collage artist Karen Arp-Sandel, the students have designed a textured, Cubist-style collage mural with references to music and musical instruments.

{Urban Grand Piano, 1998}



TRY THIS!

Rubber Band

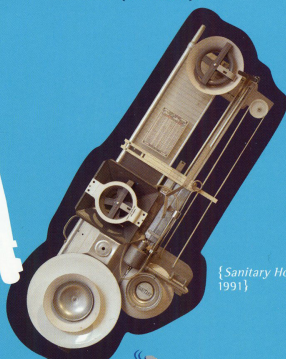
Wrap a rubber band across the top of a plastic cup and then pluck it like a guitar string. Notice what causes the sound (vibration).



TRY THIS!

HYBRID VIOLIN CUT-OUTS

On the violin, add pictures of your favorite objects (or draw your own) to create a self-portrait hybrid instrument.



{Driftwood Lungs Cello, 1992}



TRY THIS!

Water Glass Bells

Fill 4-6 glasses with water to different levels. Using a spoon to tap the glasses, notice how the sound changes depending on the amount of water.

