

## Storytelling Concerts with Diane Edgecomb

*"A storyteller in the grand tradition, Edgecomb is a virtuoso of the spoken word."* Publisher's Weekly

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### A Fire In My Heart *A Storyteller's Journey Among the Kurds*



Edgecomb (second from left) with Kurdish shepherd family – 2005

#### **A Fire in My Heart: A Storyteller's Journey Among the Kurds**

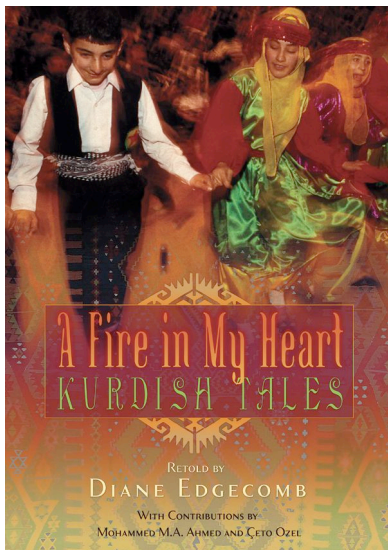
The dramatic tale of Edgecomb's story collecting journey in remote mountain villages among a people whose very language was forbidden is punctuated by colorful slides, music and folktales collected from the last living Kurdish tellers.

This entertaining and insightful performance with award-winning storyteller Diane Edgecomb charts her years collecting the vanishing folkloric tales of the Kurdish people. This seven-year quest brought Diane to remote mountain villages in Turkey – places usually forbidden to outsiders. A master teller, Edgecomb will share legends from her new book, ***A Fire In My Heart: Kurdish Tales***, never before published stories that reveal the folkloric riches of this ancient Middle Eastern culture along with anecdotes of her travels up sheer mountain roads to record the last Kurdish storytellers. The performance resonates with the humor and pathos of Kurdish village life and the colorful people that shared their lives with her.

**Diane Edgecomb: Author, Storyteller and Theatre Artist**

A nationally recognized and award-winning performer (Year's Best Performance- Boston Herald, three time winner of the Storytelling World Honor's Award), Ms. Edgecomb is widely respected as a master storyteller in the revivalist form of storytelling. Edgecomb has a background in professional theater and uses her skills as a theatre artist to transform into the characters she creates enlivening all of her material with passion and wit. Her rich narrative style and humorous outlook make her one of the most sought after tellers in the country today.

Appearances include the acclaimed Three Apples Storytelling Festival, National Public Radio, WERS, WUMB, Charlestown Working Theatre, Club Passim, and college and university theaters. Edgecomb is an approved touring artist on the roster of the New England Foundation for the Arts and has been featured in McFarland's "120 English-speaking Storytellers Worldwide" Over the past seven years she has collected stories from Kurdish refugees from Iraq, Iran, Syria and Turkey as well within remote Kurdish villages in Turkey.



**About the book:**

A valuable introduction to the Kurds of the Middle East, this unique collection, the first of its kind in English, features tales collected first-hand by the author during several years of travel to the Kurdish region of Turkey. From the Kurdish Cinderella story and humorous animal tales to stories based on legendary figures such as the Herculean Rustemê Zal, these thirty-three tales from the varied regions of Kurdistan are a wonderful resource for storytellers, folklorists and scholars. The tales are complemented by traditional Kurdish recipes, games and a brief history. Rare color photos from Iraqi Kurdistan in 1955, a map of the region and recent photos of Kurdish village life augment and give context to the stories.

## Additional Solo Concerts

### The Salmon of Wisdom

*True stories of mysterious encounters with the wild tales of travel and transformation*



This inspiring and entertaining performance is especially for those who love the natural world. The show begins with Diane's original story "Freddie and the Loon from Maine", a humorous rhyming tale of a New York cabbie who travels 'up North' in search of a loon. He "finds a LOON Motel that is on a LOON Lake, but the word ain't the bird..." and onward he must go! Humorous and evocative moments ensue as this greenhorn cabbie tries to reconnect with the wild. This piece is complemented with "The Salmon of Wisdom" ~ a true tale of a revelatory journey along California's Pacific Coast ~ a moving story of the deep beauty and mystery of nature.

### Tales of the Supernatural

For adults, not appropriate for ages 11 and under

Just in time for Halloween, Diane Edgecomb brings an unusual collection of eerie tales and songs. Definitely not for kids, this evening event features a true ghost story Edgecomb collected about the misshapen standing stones of Avebury, England and the eerie force that emanates from them. The performance has a decidedly Celtic slant exploring the Gaelic traditions that influence Halloween including the humorous encounter with the devil that brought about the first "Jack O'Lantern"





# Storytelling and Music Concerts

## Diane Edgecomb

accompanied by long time collaborator Celtic Harpist Margot Chamberlain *and others!*

### A Celtic Evening

*Irish Culture comes to life with Storytelling, Song and the strains of the Celtic harp.*



Photo by Stephen Cicco

In **A Celtic Evening**, Diane brings to life Ireland's storytelling treasures from the humorous *Legend of Knockgrafton* to the hauntingly beautiful *Deirdre of the Sorrows*. The most famous of all Irish romances, *Deirdre* weaves together Druidic prophecies with a forbidden passion so profound it dares to defy the fates. The performance is set against a lush background of harp music: original and traditional melodies played by the versatile Margot Chamberlain on a variety of Celtic folk harps. Enjoy an evening of humor, passion and music with these two inspiring performers.

*"Deirdre is nothing less than a masterpiece!"* Linda Goodman, chair, Three Apples Storytelling Festival

*"Thoughtfully composed and beautifully presented, A Celtic Evening was a joy for us all. The combination of both your talents made for an inspirational evening that moved the audience to laughter and to tears, and left us with a feeling that magic was in the air."*

Director of programming, Norman Rockwell Museum,  
Stockbridge MA

*"Publisher's Weekly said it best when they stated: 'A storyteller in the grand tradition, Edgecomb is a virtuoso of the spoken word.' She has been researching, studying, collecting and telling Celtic stories for 20 or more years and it shows...mentally and emotionally we were wherever storyteller, Ms. Edgecomb, transported us to be, while Ms. Chamberlain and her Celtic Harp made us feel at home there."* article in the Ashland Tab, March 23rd, 2006



Photo by Barbara Gates

A Celtic Evening is also available as a full musical event with the addition of Michael Punzak on story and fiddle and Tom Megan on accordion, keyboard and pennywhistle.

## In the Groves

*Celebrate trees and flowering plants with this unique performance*



Photo by Pamela Ruby Russell

*"It awakened in all of us there a sense of the spirit in things." Jay O'Callahan*

Refreshing, lyrical and provocative **In the Groves** looks at the many ways different cultures have imagined the living world of trees. From a delicate tale of love celebrating the Cherry trees of Japan, to an old English song that speaks of the hidden language of flowers, to the poignant Cornish legend of *One Tree Hill*, we'll travel 'round the world in story celebrating this garden of delights. Each tale is surrounded by music and songs from many lands. The event culminates with the haunting Czech legend *The Dancing Spirit of the Birch Grove*.

## Seasonal Programming

### Midsummer's Magic

*Experience the beauty of the Summer Solstice in Legends and Songs from Many Lands*



Photo by Pamela Ruby Russell

Midsummer's Eve is traditionally a time of magic when the luminous world of fairies can join with our own. In this unforgettable story and music event master storyteller Diane Edgecomb and Celtic Harper Margot Chamberlain take us to the heart of the season on the wings of story and song.

Drawn from cultures all over the world, Midsummer's Magic is a story and music celebration of nature at the time of the Summer Solstice. This delightful and entertaining performance brings alive Celtic, Czech, English, Japanese and Australian legends of tree-spirits, fireflies and magical transformations.

## The Winter Solstice in Legend and Song

*Classic Evergreen lore, Haunting legends of light & Entertaining Tales of the Season*



Photo by Pamela Ruby Russell

Award winning performer Diane Edgecomb accompanied by Celtic harpist Margot Chamberlain and multi-instrumentalist Tom Megan offers a fascinating look at the stories behind our holiday traditions. This performance features solstice legends from Greece, Scandinavia, and England as well as traditional music on Celtic harp, synthesizer, accordion, and voice. Songs and sing-along moments evocative of the season, a traditional wassail bowle and lovely instrumental melodies on Celtic harp and synthesizer round out the event.

**The Winter Solstice in Myth, Music and Song** includes classic evergreen lore, haunting legends of light and entertaining tales surrounded by traditional and original music and song. The beautiful ***Legend of the Mistletoe*** from Scandinavian folklore, humorous Wassail traditions from England, and the poignant Greek legend of ***The Halcyon Days of Peace*** are just a few of the pieces. The Winter Solstice can be either a one-hour or two-hour event with an intermission.



## New Age Gawain and the Green Knight

### *A Mischievous Medieval Romp!*

Diane Edgecomb accompanied by Margot Chamberlain – Celtic Harp.

The stakes are high for Arthur's men's group. First, into their midst, comes a bungee-jumping Green Man who delivers an ancient macho challenge. Then a mysterious rider gallops off with his head under his arm, taunting Gawain to follow. But the greatest fun comes when three very different female archetypes use their wiles in an attempt to corrupt Gawain's new age virtue. Welcome to **New Age Gawain and the Green Knight**, Edgecomb's hilarious send up of the new-age movement. Loosely based on the 14th century poem *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, Edgecomb's comedic adaptation has New Age Arthurian knights running for their therapists faster than you can say "Litigation!" Tom Megan's score provides a lush atmosphere of sound as we journey along the 'road less traveled by' in this fun loving tale..

This one hour performance can be combined with other seasonal tales for a longer program or stand alone as entertainment for any time of year. Appropriate for audiences ages 12 and up – this unusual New Year's tale is available in December and January.

*"Humorous and entertaining parody."* Booklist Magazine

## **BIOS**

**Diane Edgecomb:** With a background in professional theatre, (Winner of a 'Year's Best Performance Award' in 1984 from the Boston Herald), it is no wonder that Diane's performances are known for their vivid characterizations, and for the variety of dramatic styles employed. Before coming to storytelling, she worked extensively with Boston area and Regional Theatres including, Lyric Stage, Tufts Arena Theater and Double Edge Theatre, which won 'Best Ensemble' and 'Best Experimental Theatre' awards from the Phoenix, during those years. A former student at the Boston Conservatory of Music, Diane often incorporates song into her performance pieces. Diane is an unusual combination of skillful performer and avid folklorist, but it is her innate comic abilities and her versatile voice and movements that bring to the storytelling art an originally entertaining and thoroughly captivating blend. As an award-winning performer and recording artist, Edgecomb is known both for her original pieces and for her entertaining adaptations of traditional tales. She is the author of a groundbreaking book of Kurdish folktales entitled: *A Fire in My Heart: Kurdish Tales*, stories she collected in the remote mountainous regions of Kurdistan. As a duo, Diane and Margot combine rich story material with a carefully orchestrated underscoring of original and traditional music. Diane and Margot have been featured on National Public Radio as well as at theaters, coffeehouses, colleges, museums, and nature centers throughout the United States.

**Margot Chamberlain** draws on a background of singing, classical piano, medieval and folk repertoire, Celtic music, and therapeutic harp to create accompaniments that speak to the heart of story and song. She came to Boston in 1972 to study early music with Marleen Montgomery. Over the next years she sang and played Medieval bowed strings, recorders and Medieval harp with such groups as Quadrivium, LiveOak, Mistral, Laura Sheppard & Company, the Revels and the Gentle Muses. She has performed at such venues as the Gardner Museum, the Museum of Fine Arts, Counterpoint Theatre and First Night Boston, as well as in many concert situations for both adults and children. For the past twenty years she has devoted herself to the Celtic harp. Her approach to arranging and composing tunes for the harp is eclectic. She enjoys the wide range of expressions from earthy to the ethereal, from mysterious to comic that the harp makes possible. She has recorded on Woodbine, Encina, Sound Reflections, and Living Folk Records.