

# The Emily Dickinson Programs

All four programs, centered on Emily Dickinson's personal sheet music collection (her "binders" volume" which is in the Houghton Library at Harvard University), illustrate both the continuity and the variety of Dickinson's musical activities within the context of her life and times.

Each individual program, co-created by George Boziwick (Curator and Musical Director) and Trudy Williams (Artistic Director) focuses on a new and insightful element of her musical background, all of which served to uniquely inform her emerging poetic voice.

THE  
RED SKIES  
MUSIC  
ENSEMBLE  

---

RESEARCH &  
PERFORMANCE

**Program 1: "My Business is to Sing:" *Emily Dickinson, Musician and Poet*** situates Dickinson's daily musical engagements in the context of her talent and her times, along with her encounters with the music-making of the local community, the music of the Dickinson servants and the New England hymn tradition, all of which played a vital role in shaping and informing her unique poetic voice.

**Program 2: "My Wars are laid away in Books —"**  
***Emily Dickinson's Music Book: A Prelude to the Civil War*** takes audiences on a rich journey through the musical engagements, social context and historical events that informed and enlivened Dickinson's poetic voice that was emerging just as our country plunged towards Civil War.

**Program 3: *Emily Dickinson in her Elements: Accomplished Musician, Emerging Poet*** focuses on Dickinson and her time, tracing the influence of Dickinson's musical engagements on her poetic development within the context of music, nature, Amherst and New England.

**Program 4: *The Musical Parlor of Emily Dickinson*** introduces audiences to the intimate setting of music-making at the Dickinson Homestead. Performances of popular ballads, Irish dance music and minstrel tunes from her bound book of sheet music illustrate how Dickinson and her family collected, listened to and performed the music of their time.