

# The New Crossroads of American Music

Press Release



**Eastern Music Festival**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE –



## EMF BRINGS FACULTY CHAMBER PLAYERS TO REYNOLDA HOUSE

*Greensboro, NC*- As part of its Community Outreach Concerts series EMF presents Chamber Music at Reynolda, in a special performance featuring faculty members from all music departments. For the fourth year in a row, it combines exceptional musicians in a magnificent setting for an overall appreciation of art. The wide-ranging program will include works for piano, strings and wind instruments, from composers: Bozza, Villa-Lobos, Webern, Gershwin and Mendelssohn. The concert will take place on **Sunday, July 5, 2009 at 3pm** in the **Reynolda House Museum of American Art** (2250 Reynolda Road, Winston Salem, NC 27106). Tickets may be purchased for \$16 and \$13 for Reynolda House members by calling the Reynolda House Museum of American Art at 336. 758.5150.

Saturday's chamber recital will showcase a faculty brass quintet formed by trumpeters **Judith Saxton** and **Robert White**, trombonist **Gregory Cox**, **Kelly Schurr** on horn and **Lee Hipp** on tuba. In addition, the concert will include flutist **Ann Choomack**, **Judith Donaldson**, violinists **Uli Speth**, **Ioana Galu** and **Randall Weiss**, violist **Jennifer Puckett**, cellists **Rebecca Zimmerman** and **Marta Simidtchieva**, and **Yoshikazu Nagai** on piano. The varied program will surely please music followers from all instruments and the general public.

*\*Dates, programs, venues, and artists are subject to change.*

The 2009 Eastern Music Festival season is sponsored in part by the United Arts Council of Greater Greensboro, the North Carolina Arts Council, Lincoln Financial Foundation, National Endowment for the Arts, Southern Arts Federation, WFDD Triad Arts Station, Greensboro's News and Record, Continental Airways, Yes! Weekly, and Piedmont Music Center (Steinway Pianos).

For more information about EMF or its programs, please visit [www.EasternMusicFestival.org](http://www.EasternMusicFestival.org), or call toll free: 1.877.833.6753

### **More about the featured faculty**

**Judith Saxton** enjoys an international career as a versatile and sought-after performer, chamber musician, and clinician. Currently, she is principal and soloist with Key West Symphony and Shenandoah Valley Bach Festival and performs regularly with North Carolina, Greensboro, and Winston-Salem symphonies and various chamber organizations on the eastern seaboard. Most recently, she was a guest artist at Lieksa Brass Week, Finland, and toured Brazil with Musica Harmonia. Previously, she was associate professor at Wichita State University and principal with the Wichita Symphony and Wichita Brass Quintet. For three seasons, she was principal and soloist with the Hong Kong Philharmonic. A veteran Chicago freelancer, she performed with the Chicago and Grant Park symphonies and the CSO brass quintet, along with seven Chicago area orchestras. Ms. Saxton has performed and toured with the newly formed Tromba Mundi trumpet ensemble, UNCSA Brass Quintet, Jazz Septet, the Chicago Chamber Musicians, Sierra Brass, Millar, and Monarch Brass ensembles. Her recordings are on Crystal, Koss, Proto, Novitas, MSR Classics, and Moravian Music Foundation labels. She is on the boards of the International Trumpet Guild, International Women's Brass Conference, and the National Trumpet Competition. Her degrees are from Mansfield and Northwestern Universities. Her teachers include Vincent Cichowicz, Arnold Jacobs, William Scarlett, Susan Slaughter, and Michael Galloway. She taught previously at Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts and Illinois Wesleyan and Northeastern Illinois universities. She is artist faculty and brass coordinator at the University of North Carolina School of the Arts and returns for her twelfth season at Eastern Music Festival.

**Robert White** holds the position of second trumpet with the Charlotte Symphony. Prior to joining them in 2004, Dr. White was on the faculty of Indiana State University and enjoyed an active career in Indianapolis as a studio musician and freelance trumpeter. While in Indianapolis, Dr. White also performed regularly with the Indianapolis Symphony, the Indianapolis Chamber Orchestra, the Columbus Symphony, the Fort Wayne Philharmonic, and the New World Symphony. He has also participated in the Spoleto USA Festival, Music Academy of the West, and the Aspen Music Festival. Dr. White completed a Doctor of Music degree in trumpet from Indiana University, where he also received his master's degree, and appeared as soloist with the IU Chamber Orchestra. He completed a Bachelor of Music Education degree from Western Michigan University. His primary trumpet teachers are John Rommel, Stephen Burns, and Scott Thornburg. This is his fourth season with EMF.

**Gregory Cox** returns for his 32<sup>nd</sup> season as principal trombone with the Eastern Festival Orchestra. During the remainder of the year, he is a member of the Vancouver Symphony. In addition to his orchestral position, he serves on the faculties of Western Washington University, the University of British Columbia, and the Vancouver Academy of Music. Mr. Cox is active as an adjudicator, clinician, chamber musician, and recitalist, and he has performed extensively in British Columbia, Washington, and North Carolina.

Mr. Cox has recorded extensively on Polydor, Mark, CRI, and CBC labels and is also active as a studio musician. A former member of the North Carolina Symphony and a former faculty member of the North Carolina School of the Arts, Mr. Cox has also performed with the Rochester Philharmonic, the Regina and Winnipeg symphonies, and the CBC Vancouver Chamber Orchestra. Mr. Cox received his Bachelor of Music degree from the Eastman School of Music. His major teachers include Kenneth Cloud, William Gray, and Emory B. Remington.

**Kelly Schurr** is in her fifth season with EMF. She is currently third horn with the Southwest Michigan Symphony Orchestra and is an active freelancer in the greater Chicagoland area. In addition to two seasons with the Civic Orchestra of Chicago, her freelance career has taken her beyond Chicago where she has performed with the Kansas City Symphony, the Fort Wayne Philharmonic, the Nashville Symphony, and many others. In her extra time, she performs at many retirement homes under the name "Music Elyon." Ms. Schurr has studiously attended Northwestern University, New England Conservatory, and the Cincinnati Conservatory and is honored to have studied with Gail Williams, Dick Mackey, Randy Gardner, and Ted Thayer. Ms. Schurr is engaged to EMF violist Jamie Hofman.

**Lee Hipp**, principal tuba of the San Antonio Symphony and the San Antonio Brass since 1989, has also performed with the Dallas, Houston, and Atlanta symphonies, the Miami City Ballet Orchestra, the Southwest Florida Symphony, and two seasons as acting principal tuba with the Utah Symphony. Mr. Hipp has also taught tuba and euphonium at the University of Texas at San Antonio and the University of Utah and is currently instructor of tuba and euphonium at St. Mary's University. Mr. Hipp is a native Texan and received his B.M. in education from Texas Tech University, studying with David Payne. He earned his M.M. in tuba performance at Southern Methodist University, studying with Everette Gilmore and Sandy Keathley. Mr. Hipp has also studied with David Kirk of the Houston Symphony, Dennis Miller of the Orchestre Symphonique de Montréal, and Donald Little of the University of North Texas and the Dallas Opera. Mr. Hipp has performed as a soloist, in concert, and recital, with groups such as the San Antonio Symphony, the Utah Symphony, the Dallas Wind Symphony, the Winters Chamber Orchestra, the San Antonio Brass, the King William Winds, and the University of Utah Wind Symphony. He has recorded with the Utah and Atlanta symphonies and can be heard on the 1999 Telarc recording of the Brahms *Requiem* with the Utah Symphony and the Mormon Tabernacle Choir as well as the 2005 GRAMMY® Award-winning Atlanta Symphony and Chorus recording of the Berlioz *Requiem*. Mr. Hipp has also conducted educational clinics throughout the state of Texas and across the United States. Along with his many performing and teaching duties, Mr. Hipp was also a contributing editor for *The Tuba Source Book* published by Indiana University Press. Mr. Hipp is a *Yamaha Artist* performing on the Yamaha 822 F Tuba and the Culbertson "Neptune" CC. He has served as principal tuba at EMF since 2000.

**Ann Choomack** performs with the Richmond Symphony in Richmond, Virginia as third flute/piccolo. A graduate of the Eastman School of Music, she went on to complete her master's degree at the New England Conservatory in Boston. Before arriving in

Richmond, Ms. Choomack participated in numerous music festivals including Music Academy of the West, National Repertory Orchestra, and the Tanglewood Music Center. In addition to her duties with the Richmond Symphony, she also performs regularly with the Virginia Symphony and the Virginia Opera, as well as maintaining a private teaching studio in Richmond. This is Ms. Choomack's fifth summer at EMF.

Clarinetist **Judith Donaldson** is the second and E-flat clarinetist of the Alabama Symphony Orchestra. As a freelancer, she has also played with the Tuscaloosa Symphony, with the orchestras of Tampa and Jacksonville, and with The Florida Orchestra. She is on the faculties of Birmingham Southern College and the University of Alabama at Birmingham. Former teaching affiliations include the University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, and the University of Montevallo. She was a founding member of the Cahaba Trio and Birmingham Musica Antiqua. Ms. Donaldson received bachelor's and master's degrees from the New England Conservatory. She has been a member of the EMF faculty since 1976.

A native of Germany, **Uli Speth** completed his undergraduate studies at the Mozarteum in Salzburg/Austria where he was a student of Harald Herzl of the Pro Arte Quartet Salzburg. He participated in numerous performance classes given by Yfrah Neaman, Thomas Brandis, Jaap Schroeder, and Nicolaus Harnoncourt, among others. After migrating to the U.S., he earned his Master of Music degree from the Mannes College of Music. He was a student of Felix Galimir from whom he received both violin and string quartet training. He is first violinist of the Diller-Quaile String Quartet in residence at the Diller-Quaile School of Music in New York. This group has played concerts throughout the U.S., has commissioned and premiered new pieces for string quartet, and performed live on Vermont Public Radio and KMFA of Texas. It maintains a vital presence in the New York community by offering a series of recitals and giving outreach concerts for children in public schools in the South Bronx, Harlem, and the Lower East Side. As a chamber musician, Mr. Speth has also enjoyed the opportunity of performing alongside well-known soloists and members of the Hagen, Pro Arte, Cavaliere, and Ying quartets. His recent solo performances of various concerti by Bach, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, and Mendelssohn and recitals with pianist Mary Robbins have earned him praise by the critics for his "brilliant sound and facile fingers" (*Austin American Statesman*) and "gorgeous tone and stunning technique" (*Salzburger Nachrichten*). He serves as concertmaster of the Binghamton Philharmonic Orchestra. This is Mr. Speth's fourth season on EMF's faculty.

**Ioana Galu** is a graduate of the Gheorghe Dima Music Academy of Cluj, Romania. Before coming to the U.S., she served on the faculty of the Gheorghe Dima Music Academy as an assistant professor of violin and chamber music. She earned a master's degree in violin performance from Bowling Green State University, and currently she is enrolled in a doctoral program at the College Conservatory of Music, University of Cincinnati. Her additional studies include a scholarship at the Academie National de Villecroze in 2000 in France. Since September 2004, she has been appointed to the faculty of the Heidelberg Music College in Tiffin, Ohio, and became the director of the preparatory department in September 2005. Her awards include the second prize in the

Mozart International Competition for Piano Trios (Romania) and the first prize and special prize in the SOROS Foundation in the George Enescu Violin National Competition (Romania). She also won the second prize in the Starling Violin Competition (University of Cincinnati), and she was the winner of the University of Cincinnati Concerto Competition in February 2004. She has performed recitals in Romania, Budapest, Düsseldorf, Lyon, and Villecroze (France), Bowling Green, Toledo, Cincinnati, and New York City. She appeared as a soloist with several philharmonic orchestras in Romania, with CCM Orchestra in 2004, and with Perrysburg Symphony in March 2005. Currently, Ms. Galu is teaching at Eastern Music Festival in North Carolina for her sixth season and serves on the faculty for the Allegheny Music Festival in Pennsylvania.

**Randall Weiss**, principal second violin of the Eastern Festival Orchestra, made his solo debut as a winner of the Victoria, BC concerto competition. He studied with Tadeusz Wronski at Indiana University, received his M.M. from the University of Victoria under Paul Kling, and engaged in further study at both the Peabody and Oberlin conservatories, most notably with Sylvia Rosenberg and William Berman. Mr. Weiss spent 17 years as assistant concertmaster of the San José Symphony, regularly substituting as concertmaster. He is currently assistant concertmaster of Symphony Silicon Valley and has been associate concertmaster of the Music in the Mountains Festival, as well as concertmaster of the Santa Cruz Symphony and the AIMS Orchestra in Graz, Austria. He has performed with the San Francisco Opera Orchestra, the San Francisco Ballet Orchestra, and the New Century Chamber Orchestra. As a member of the Louisville Orchestra, Mr. Weiss participated in the First Edition recordings under the direction of Jorge Mester. Mr. Weiss is the founder of Music in the Mishkan, a chamber music series in San Francisco, and he is a founding member of The Bridge Players, a chamber ensemble based in San Francisco. Mr. Weiss joined the EMF faculty in 1989.

Violist **Jennifer Puckett** has just completed her third season as Principal Viola with the Memphis Symphony Orchestra. Prior to her tenure with the MSO, she was a member of the New World Symphony in Miami Beach, Florida for three years. Originally trained as a violinist, she received her bachelor's degree in violin performance from the University of Alabama. She has also attended various summer music festivals such as the Brevard Music Center, Sewanee Summer Music Center, Meadowmount School of Music, National Repertory Orchestra, Sarasota Music Festival, and the Aspen Music Festival. Aspen led her to the University of Colorado in Boulder where she received her master's degree in viola performance. Miss Puckett held teaching assistantships for the three years that she was at the University of Colorado including being a member of the graduate string quartet her first year. Over the years she has played professionally with many orchestras including the Colorado Symphony, Alabama Symphony, Missouri Symphony Society, Tuscaloosa Symphony, Tupelo Symphony, Huntsville Symphony, and the Central City Opera. Her experience as principal viola include the 2005 Mahlerfest in Boulder, Colorado, numerous occasions with the New World Symphony, and throughout her college career.

**Rebecca Zimmerman** began studying piano at the age of four and cello at the age of ten. Throughout her early development as a cellist, she studied with several teachers including Dajing Yang, Jim Wilson of the Shanghai Quartet, and Neal Cary, principal cellist of the Richmond Symphony. Ms. Zimmerman graduated from the Cleveland Institute of Music in 2003 with a B.M. in Cello Performance, studying under Stephen Geber, former principal cellist of The Cleveland Orchestra. In 2008, she received her master's degree from Northwestern University under the instruction of Hans Jorgen Jensen. Ms. Zimmerman has attended Eastern Music Festival, Tanglewood, Kent-Blossom Music Festival, and the National Orchestral Institute—all of which she served as principal cellist. Ms. Zimmerman's competition winnings include the 1999 Richmond Symphony and the 2000 Eastern Music Festival concerto competitions. Ms. Zimmerman has held positions in the Canton Symphony, the Richmond Symphony, New World Symphony, and Northwest Indiana Symphony. She is currently an active teacher and performer in Chicago where she teaches for the Merit School of Music and plays with several chamber orchestras including Camerata Chicago, New Millennium Orchestra, and Erato Chamber Orchestra.

Cellist **Marta Simidchieva** enjoys an active career as a soloist, chamber musician, and teacher. She is currently the assistant professor of cello at Southern Illinois University, Edwardsville, where she is also a member of the LeClaire Piano Trio and the Illinois Symphony Orchestra. A native of Bourgas, Bulgaria, and graduate of the Bulgarian State Academy of Music in Sofia, she earned her doctorate of music from Florida State University where she was a student of Lubomir Georgiev. Dr. Simidchieva has also been a member of the Eppes String Quartet with whom she worked closely with composer Ellen Taaffe-Zwilich and performed and premiered contemporary works for string quartet. Her interest in contemporary music has intersected with her desire to perform music by fellow Bulgarians. This research has led to a series of lectures and recitals presented at various universities throughout the United States titled "Lifting the Veil: Presenting Unknown Compositions for Cello and Piano by Bulgarian Composers to American Audiences." In 2004, Dr. Simidchieva performed the Vivaldi *Concerto for Two Celli* with vocalist Bobby McFerrin as part of the Tallahassee, Florida, *Seven Days of Opening Nights* festival. The recipient of numerous awards and prizes, she has been a member of, or performed with the Tallahassee Symphony Orchestra, New Symphony Orchestra (Sofia, Bulgaria), Orlando Philharmonic, Columbus (Georgia) Symphony, Eastern Music Festival Orchestra, Wildwood Opera Festival, and at the New Bulgarian Music Festival.

### **More about Eastern Music Festival**

Now in its 48th year, the Eastern Music Festival & School is recognized for its prodigious contributions to the field of American music and its commitment to nurturing talented American and international youth through a collaborative learning process. The program brings together a cross-section of America's most sought-after artists with pre-professional students in a five-week schedule of 100 concerts and music-related events. **Music Director Gerard Schwarz** heads a distinguished list of participating artists scheduled for 2009, including **Peter Serkin, Sarah Chang, Horacio Gutiérrez, Nadja Salerno Sonnenberg, Xavier Phillips**, plus many others.

The Festival also produces a popular EMF*fringe* series of alternative programming, featuring everything from Americana to alt country, blues, jazz and gospel with artists such as **Mike Cross, The John Cowan Band, Laurelyn Dossett, Steep Canyon Rangers, Waybacks, The Chris Hicks Band**, blues artist **Larry McCray** and more. EMF*kids* offers camps and concerts with each uniquely designed to foster a love and knowledge for classical and non-classical music. This year's concerts are **Shana Banana** and **Dan Zanes**. EMF*jazz&blues* runs each spring and EMF Fringe on the Fall each autumn. Season tickets on sale through June 27<sup>th</sup> (EMF*fringe* season tickets on sale through July 9<sup>th</sup>); single tickets on sale now. [www.EasternMusicFestival.org](http://www.EasternMusicFestival.org); Box Office 336.272.0160 or 866.579-TIXX.

*The Eastern Music Festival's mission is to promote musical enrichment, excellence, professional collaboration, innovation and diversity through a nationally-recognized teaching program, music festival, concerts and other programs which will enhance the quality of life, health and vitality of our region.*

EMF is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization.  
All contributions are tax deductible to the full extent allowed by law.

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