

The New Crossroads of American Music

Press Release



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EMF PRESENTS PETER SERKIN PERFORMING BRAHMS,
ALONG WITH RIMSKY-KORSAKOV & SRIABIN

Greensboro, NC- Eastern Music Festival proudly presents the opening concert of its Lincoln Financial Festival Orchestra Series, under the baton of **Maestro Gerard Schwarz**. The program will feature famed **American pianist Peter Serkin** performing Brahms' Piano Concerto No.1 in D minor, op.15, as well as works by Rimsky-Korsakov and Scriabin. Made possible with the support of the Lincoln Financial Foundation, the concert will take place on **Saturday, July 4th, 2009 at 8pm** in **Dana Auditorium at Guilford College** (5800 West Friendly Ave., Greensboro, NC 27410). Tickets may be purchased for \$51 for reserved seating and \$41 for general admission by calling the EMF Box Office at Triad Stage at 336.272.0160 or 866-579-TIXX, or online at www.EasternMusicFestival.org.

Mr. Serkin is a renowned performer who has graced international stages with his powerful interpretations and outstanding collaborations in numerous areas of the classical music genre. Joining efforts with the Eastern Festival Orchestra, he will offer a rendition of Brahms' Piano Concerto No. 1 in D Minor, op.15. The work is charged with passion, encompassing emotional outbursts and extreme dynamics. There is a complex interaction between soloist and orchestra, which shows a new stylistic side of Brahms. Still it carries the lyricism and romantic quality characteristic of his previous works.

The program also includes the gloriously ceremonial Russian Easter Overture, op.36 by Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov. Inspired through the composer's childhood experiences in a monastery, its melodies derive from Russian Orthodox chants. The work creates a solemn and dark ambiance, emphasizing its most brilliant element: the instrumentation. Consequently, the evening features The Poem of Ecstasy by the Russian composer, Alexander Scriabin. In this piece, the composer exploits the range of orchestral colors

creating an exceptional degree of sustained intensity. In a single movement, this tone poem is recognized as his most focused, compelling and powerful orchestral work.

A free pre-concert conversation with musicologist Dr. Greg Carroll, called *Musically Speaking*, explores the history of the evening's composers and repertoire in a casual, conversational atmosphere. *Musically Speaking* begins at 7pm in the Moon Room of Dana Auditorium and is free and open to the public. There is also a pre-concert prelude beginning at 7:15pm in front of Dana Auditorium to welcome concertgoers.

BB&T is a proud sponsor of Peter Serkin for this performance. This concert will also host the Realtors' Commercial Alliance.

More about Peter Serkin

Recognized as an artist of passion and integrity, the distinguished American pianist **Peter Serkin** is one of the most thoughtful and individualistic musicians appearing before the public today. Throughout his career he has successfully conveyed the essence of five centuries of repertoire and his performances with symphony orchestras, recital appearances, chamber music collaborations, and recordings are respected worldwide.

Peter Serkin's rich musical heritage extends back several generations: his grandfather was violinist and composer Adolf Busch, and his father, pianist Rudolf Serkin. In 1958, at age 11, he entered the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia where he was a student of Lee Luvisi, Mieczyslaw Horszowski, and Rudolf Serkin. He later continued his studies with Ernst Oster, Marcel Moyse, and Karl Ulrich Schnabel. In 1959, Mr. Serkin made his Marlboro Music Festival and New York City debuts with conductor Alexander Schneider, and invitations to perform with the Cleveland Orchestra and George Szell in Cleveland and Carnegie Hall and with the Philadelphia Orchestra and Eugene Ormandy in Philadelphia and Carnegie Hall soon followed. He has since performed with the world's major symphony orchestras with such eminent conductors as Seiji Ozawa, Pierre Boulez, Daniel Barenboim, Claudio Abbado, Simon Rattle, James Levine, Herbert Blomstedt, and Christoph Eschenbach. Also a dedicated chamber musician, Mr. Serkin has collaborated with Alexander Schneider, Pamela Frank, Yo-Yo Ma, and the Budapest, Guarneri, and Orion string quartets and TASHI, of which he was a founding member.

An avid proponent of the music of many of the 20th and 21st century's most important composers, Mr. Serkin has been instrumental in bringing the music of Schoenberg, Webern, Berg, Stravinsky, Wolpe, Messiaen, Takemitsu, Henze, Berio, Wuorinen, Goehr, Knussen, and Lieberon, among others, to audiences around the world. He has performed many important world premieres, in particular, works by Toru Takemitsu, Peter Lieberon, Oliver Knussen, and Alexander Goehr, all of which were written for him. Most recently, Mr. Serkin played the world premieres of Charles Wuorinen's *Piano Concerto No. 4* with the Boston Symphony under the

baton of James Levine in Boston, at Carnegie Hall, and at Tanglewood; a solo work by Elliot Carter commissioned by Carnegie Hall and the Gilmore International Keyboard Festival; and another work by Charles Wuorinen for piano and orchestra with the Orchestra of St. Luke's, also commissioned by Carnegie Hall. During the 2008-09 season, he premieres a fifth piano concerto by Mr. Wuorinen with the Met Opera Orchestra/Levine at Carnegie Hall as well as Mr. Wuorinen's new piano quintet (commissioned by the Rockport, MA Music Festival) with the Brentano String Quartet.

Highlights of Peter Serkin's recent and upcoming appearances include performances with the New York Philharmonic, Philadelphia and Minnesota orchestras, and the Boston, San Francisco, Detroit, St. Louis, Toronto, and Atlanta symphonies and the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra; recitals in Carnegie Hall, the Kennedy Center, Orchestra Hall in Chicago, and New York's 92nd Street Y; performances with the original members of TASHI in Boston, Portland Ore., Princeton, and Town Hall in New York City; and summer festival appearances at Ravinia, Aspen, Ojai, Caramoor, Tanglewood, Blossom, Saratoga, and the Mann Center with the Philadelphia Orchestra.

Internationally, Mr. Serkin returned to Japan in September 2007 to play recitals featuring the works of Toru Takemitsu and Bach in honor of the 10th anniversary of Takemitsu's death and appeared with the Berlin Philharmonic, Deutsches Symphony Orchestra, and the Bamberg Symphony during the 2007-08 season.

Peter Serkin's recordings also reflect his distinctive musical vision. The *Ocean that has no West and no East*, released by Koch Records in 2000, features compositions by Webern, Wolpe, Messiaen, Takemitsu, Knussen, Lieberson, and Wuorinen. That same year, BMG released his recording of three Beethoven sonatas. Additional recordings include the Brahms violin sonatas with Pamela Frank, Dvořák's *Piano Quintet* with the Orion String Quartet, quintets by Henze and Brahms with the Guarneri String Quartet, the Bach double and triple concerti with Andras Schiff and Bruno Canino, and Takemitsu's *Quotation of Dream* with Oliver Knussen and the London Sinfonietta. His most recent recording is the complete works for solo piano by Arnold Schoenberg for Arcana.

Mr. Serkin's recording of the six Mozart concerti composed in 1784 with Alexander Schneider and the English Chamber Orchestra was nominated for a GRAMMY® and received the prestigious Deutsche Schallplatten as well as "Best Recording of the Year" by *Stereo Review* magazine. Other GRAMMY® nominated recordings include Olivier Messiaen's *Vingt Regards sur l'Enfant Jesus* and *Quartet for the End of Time* on BMG and a solo recording of works by Stravinsky, Wolpe, and Lieberson for New World Records.

In May 2001, Peter Serkin was the recipient of an Honorary Doctoral Degree from the New England Conservatory of Music in Boston. He was also the first pianist to receive the Premio Internazionale Musicale Chigiana in recognition of his

outstanding artistic achievements. Mr. Serkin resides in Massachusetts with his wife, Regina, and is the father of five children.

More about Gerard Schwarz

Born to Viennese parents, EMF music director **Gerard Schwarz** has served as the Seattle Symphony Orchestra's music director since 1985. He is a recipient of the Ditson Conductor's award from Columbia University and was the first American to be named Conductor of the Year by *Musical America*. He holds numerous honorary doctorates, including ones from The Juilliard School, Cornish College of the Arts, Seattle University, University of Puget Sound, and Fairleigh Dickinson University. Recent highlights for Maestro Schwarz include two consecutive Emmy Awards in 2007 and 2008 for televised performances with Seattle Symphony; leading Seattle Symphony in its recent Southern California Tour; and conducting Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony* with the 600-member community orchestra and chorus for His Holiness the Dalai Lama during the recent visit to Seattle sponsored by Seeds of Compassion.

Maestro Schwarz has received 12 GRAMMY® nominations, six ASCAP awards, and numerous *Stereo Review* and Ovation awards. In June 2007, he received an Emmy for his performance with Seattle Symphony of Shostakovich's *Eighth Symphony*. Moreover, Maestro Schwarz won critical acclaim that season for his remarkable collaboration with Dale Chihuly to present Bartók's *Bluebeard's Castle*. His extensive discography of some 250 releases showcases his collaborations with some of the world's most prestigious orchestras, including The Philadelphia Orchestra; the Tokyo, Czech and Royal Liverpool philharmonics; the London Symphony Orchestra, Orchestra National de France and Berlin Radio Symphony; the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra; and the New York Chamber and Seattle symphonies. Soon to be released are works by Mahler, Arthur Foote, Bright Sheng, and Samuel Jones, as well as Deems Taylor's *Peter Ibbetson* and the first complete recording of Kurt Weill's *Eternal Road*.

In addition to his leadership at Eastern Music Festival, Maestro Schwarz has also served as music director of New York's Mostly Mozart Festival, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, and New York Chamber Symphony, as well as artistic advisor to Tokyu Bunkamura's Orchard Hall.

Tickets: Triad Stage Box Office 336.272.0160 or 866.579.TIXX or www.EasternMusicFestival.org.

*a service fee will apply

Discounts are available for full-time students with a valid ID, seniors aged 65 or older, and groups of 10 or more for most performances. Young Artists and EMF*kids* concerts offer family-friendly packages. Please call the box office about packages. This season most discounts will be available at the door. Discounts and gift certificates will not be accepted for concerts designated as special events.

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

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 preprofessional 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, and 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, 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 classically 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 27th (EMF*fringe* season tickets on sale through July 9th); single tickets on sale now. www.EasternMusicFestival.org; Box Office 336.272.0160 or 866.579-TIXX.

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, or call toll free: 1.877.833.6753

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 non profit organization.
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