

The New Crossroads of American Music

Press Release



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EMF CLOSSES SEASON WITH XAVIER PHILLIPS AND MAESTRO SCHWARZ

Greensboro, NC- Eastern Music Festival and its Lincoln Financial Festival Orchestra Series will come to a finale on **Saturday, August 1, 2009 at 8pm**. Led by **Maestro Gerard Schwarz**, the Eastern Festival Orchestra will perform works by Aitken and Debussy, as well as join forces with French **cellist Xavier Phillips** in an extraordinary performance of Strauss' *Don Quixote*. Made possible with the support of the Lincoln Financial Foundation, the concert will be held in **Dana Auditorium at Guilford College** (5800 West Friendly Ave., Greensboro, NC 27410). Tickets may be purchased for \$47 for reserved seating and \$37 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.

An accomplished instrumentalist, Xavier Phillips was a pupil of the late Mstislav Rostropovich. The winner of numerous competitions and prizes, he continues to perform with major orchestras around the world. Mr. Phillips' collaboration with the Eastern Festival Orchestra centers on the presentation of one of Richard Strauss most famous masterpieces. *Don Quixote*, op.35, TrV 184 is an orchestral composition based on a book by Miguel de Cervantes, titled: "*Don Quixote de la Mancha*." The piece is a 'fantasy with variations', scored for cello, viola and large orchestra. Strauss gives the cello a particularly prominent part as the soloist, playing the role of the book's main character: *Don Quixote*.

The evening concert will also feature Claude Debussy's *La mer*. This ingenious orchestral work depicts Debussy's infatuation with water and the sea. It carries glorious

sonority, ever-changing colors and unique textures, which make it an orchestral showpiece. Hugh Aitken's Song Dance will complete the evening's repertoire.

A free pre-concert conversation with conductor Peter Perret, 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.

Davenport, Marvin, Joyce & Co., LLP is the proud sponsor of Xavier Phillips for this Greensboro performance.

More about Xavier Phillips

Xavier Phillips was born in Paris in 1971. He began to study the cello at the age of six with Jacqueline Heuclin. At fifteen, he entered the CNSM of Paris in Philippe Muller's class, and at the end he obtained a first prize in 1989.

He won several international prizes (second prize and special prize at Musical Youths of Belgrade, special prize at the Tchaikovski Competition in Moscow, third prize and special prize at the Rostropovitch Competition in Paris, and first prize by unanimous decision at the 1st Competition of Helsinki).

His meeting with Mstislav Rostropovitch, having noticed him at the time of his competition, marked the beginning of a long collaboration during which Xavier Phillips improved near the Master.

Soon he was invited to perform on the largest international scenes with prestigious orchestras (Orchestre National de France, Philharmonique de Radio France, Berliner Symphoniker, Houston Symphony, BBC Scottish Orchestra, Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, Filarmonica della Scala) on the invitation of famous conductors such as Riccardo Muti, Christoph Eschenbach, James Conlon, Marek Janowski, Serge Baudo, Vladimir Fedosyev, Ion Marin, Kazushi Ono, Jesus Lopez-Cobos, Eliahu Inbal, Georges Prêtre, and Vladimir Spivakov.

After his very brilliant debut with the Orchestre de Paris in September 2001, Mstislav Rostropovitch recognizes in him an achieved soloist with growing maturity. Then he invited him to play, under his baton, Prokofiev's *Symphonia concertante* with the Washington National Symphony Orchestra and the New York Philharmonic.

Still under the baton of his mentor Mstislav Rostropovitch, and less than one year later, Xavier Phillips made his debut with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra in Tchaikovski's *Variations on a rococo theme*. Carried by this confidence and the huge success gained at the time of his concerts in the United States, he was invited by the Seattle Symphony Orchestra for several concerts under the conducting of Vassili Sinaïski.

In September 2006, he was the first soloist invited by the Orchestre de Paris for the reopening of the Salle Pleyel and was distinguished in his interpretation of Henri Dutilleux's *Tout un monde lointain* in the presence of the composer.

His eclectic and varied discography earned Phillips a "Choc" by the magazine *Le Monde de la Musique* for the following recordings: Kodaly (Harmonia Mundi/Lontano) with his brother Jean-Marc Phillips-Varjabedian, *Works for Cello & Orchestra* (Lalo, Fauré, Caplet at EMI - Classics), *Sonatas of Schnittke, Shostakovitch and Prokofiev* with the pianist Hüseyin Sermet (Harmonia Mundi), as well as the Grand Prix du Disque for Alberic Magnard's chamber music (Auvidis Valois). *Armenia*, a CD devoted to Armenian music with Jean-Marc Phillips-Varjabédian and Vahan Mardirossian at Warner Classics was published in 2007.

Xavier Phillips has appeared in the Schumann concerto with the Orchestre National de France under the conducting of Kurt Masur at the Theatre des Champs-Élysées in February 2007, and he will play with the Orchestre de la Suisse Romande in December 2007 and May 2008 under Marek Janowski, then in the Dvořák's concerto with the Seattle Symphony Orchestra under Günther Herbig.

Xavier Phillips plays on a Matteo Goffriller cello dated 1710, a loan from a sponsor, the coffee brand "Blue de Brazil".

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, Orchestre 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.

Early this month, Maestro Schwarz recently was awarded the Key to the City of Greensboro by Mayor Yvonne Johnson.

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.*

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, Awadagin Pratt, 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. Single tickets and FlexPasses 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 nonprofit organization.
All contributions are tax deductible to the full extent allowed by law.

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