Prominent Instrumentalists Join Vocal Arts and Music Festival at Virginia Tech

Internationally acclaimed musicians who have performed with orchestras and chamber music ensembles throughout the world will be part of the Vocal Arts and Music Festival at Virginia Tech from June 18-July 1.

Blacksburg, Va. (PRWEB) May 10, 2011 -- Internationally acclaimed musicians who have performed with orchestras and chamber music ensembles throughout the world will be part of the Vocal Arts and Music Festival.

Presented by the Center for the Arts at Virginia Tech from June 18-July 1, this festival is in its second year and was called Viva Virginia last year.

From cellists to clarinetists, the instrumentalists will bring their breadth of musical experience and knowledge to the Virginia Tech campus, joining the festival’s vocal masters and coaches for 14 days of performances, masterclasses, and more. Up-and-coming opera singers audition to participate in the festival and are selected by International Vocal Arts Institute founders Joan Dornemann and Paul Nadler, both with the Metropolitan Opera. The Vocal Arts and Music Festival is one of three such programs that the institute presents across the globe; the other two are in Tel Aviv, Israel, and Montreal, Canada.

The instrumentalists will include

Shmuel Ashkenasi, first violinist of the Vermeer Quartet and professor of violin at Northern Illinois University, performs extensively as a soloist in the United States, Europe, South America, the former Soviet Union, and Japan. His personal recording credits include the Paganini "Violin Concerti" with the Vienna Philharmonic, recorded for Deutsche Grammophon; Mozart's Violin Concerto No. 5, KV 219; and the Beethoven "Romances" with the Zurich Chamber Orchestra, recorded for Tudor Records.

Robert deMaine is a virtuoso cellist who has collaborated with a variety of conductors and has performed cello concerto repertoire with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, where he has been principal cellist since 2002. deMaine has presented master classes throughout the United States and abroad.

David Ehrlich, violinist, began his professional career as concertmaster and soloist with the Tel Aviv Chamber Orchestra. In 1984 he joined the Audubon String Quartet at Virginia Tech as first violinist. With the quartet, Ehrlich toured all over the world, performing on stage and on radio and television. Since 2004, Ehrlich has served as an Outreach Fellow of Fine Arts at Virginia Tech, where he is involved in developing music programs in underserved communities of southern and southwest Virginia.

Alexander Fiterstein, clarinetist, has performed in recital and with orchestras and chamber music ensembles throughout the world. As a soloist, he has appeared with the Vienna Chamber Orchestra, Israel Chamber Orchestra, Jerusalem Symphony, Tokyo Philharmonic, and China National Symphony Orchestra. He has performed in recital at venues such as the National Gallery of Art, the Kennedy Center, and the Louvre. Fiterstein was recently appointed as the artist/professor of clarinet at the University of North Carolina School of the Arts and has been on the faculty of Kean University since 2005.

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Michael Kløtz is the violinist of the Amernet String Quartet, whose members are artists-in-residence of Florida International University School of Music in Miami. Kløtz made his debut as soloist with the Rochester Philharmonic at age 17. Since then he has performed as soloist, recitalist, and chamber musician on four continents. In 2002, he became one of only a few individuals to receive a double master's degree in violin and viola from the Juilliard School.

Milena Pajarov-van de Stadt has appeared as a soloist with the Tokyo Philharmonic Orchestra, the Jacksonville Symphony Orchestra, and the Sphinx Chamber Orchestra, and has performed recitals and chamber music throughout the U.S. and in Europe. She served as principal violist of the Curtis Symphony Orchestra in the 2008-2009 season, and is principal violist of Symphony in C in Camden, N.J. She is currently a student at the Curtis Institute of Music and is a member of The Old City String Quartet.

Milana Strezeva won the IBLA International Competition as a vocal collaborator in 1998, which led to her debut recital at Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall. She has made chamber music appearances, has been part of opera productions, and is a vocal collaborator and coach. Strezeva is also the founding member of the award-winning Manhattan Piano Trio and has performed more than 300 concerts in the past seven seasons, both national and internationally.

Mathias Tacke was the second violinist of the acclaimed Vermeer Quartet and served as a member of the Ensemble Modern Frankfurt. He appears internationally as a soloist and chamber player has made recordings for such labels as Sony, ECM, Harmonia Mundi, Naxos, and Cedille. Three of the Vermeer Quartet recordings were nominated for Grammy Awards. Tacke is professor of violin and chamber music at Northern Illinois University and guest lecturer for string chamber music at Northwestern University.

Alan Weinstein, assistant professor of cello and bass at Virginia Tech, is a founding member of the Kandinsky Trio and has performed throughout North America and Europe in venues such as Carnegie Hall, Merkin Hall, and the Kennedy Center. He has appeared on television and radio broadcasts throughout the United States and Canada, including the "McNeil/Lehrer Report," WNYC, and "Performance Today" on National Public Radio. Weinstein has given more than 200 masterclasses and has recorded for Arabesque Records and the Brioso labels.

Benjamin Wyatt, cellist, is an adjunct faculty member in Continuing and Professional Education at Virginia Tech. In addition to solo, chamber, and orchestral work, he has worked in popular and commercial idioms, including film and television soundtracks, and Broadway musicals. His chamber music performances have been broadcast live in New York and Los Angeles. Wyatt joined the Renaissance Music Academy in 2007.

Blacksburg is the only location in the United States to host this group of rising stars and internationally recognized opera legends, coaches, and instrumentalists.

Media sponsors for the Vocal Arts and Music Festival are WDBJ7 and Virginia Living Magazine.

Through a comprehensive arts strategic plan, Virginia Tech has made a strong commitment to the arts on campus and in surrounding communities. The cornerstone initiative of the strategic plan is the Center for the Arts at Virginia Tech. Opening in 2013, the Center for the Arts at Virginia Tech will include a 1,260-seat, state-of-the-art performance hall for music, theatre, and dance performance as well as visual arts galleries for traditional, digital, and new media exhibitions. It also will include the Institute for Creativity, Arts, and Technology, a laboratory for innovation where faculty and students, in coordination with partners from
Virginia’s school systems, can research, develop, and apply modules for learning in a collaborative, transdisciplinary setting. The institute was built in conjunction with the existing resources at Virginia Tech, and its charge will be to address educational, economic, and cultural needs in Southwest Virginia.

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