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Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MUSIC DIRECTOR GERARD SCHWARZ AND EASTERN MUSIC FESTIVAL COMMISSION FIVE WORLD PREMIERES TO CELEBRATE 50th ANNIVERSARY SEASON

March 17, 2011 - *Greensboro, NC* – **In celebration of its 50th Anniversary, the Eastern Music Festival & School (EMF) has commissioned five new world premieres from composers Pierre Jalbert, Peter Boyer, Michael Hersch, Philip Rothman, and Vivian Fung, all of whom will be in attendance for their premieres. This marks the first time that Eastern Music Festival will have five world premieres in one season, each of which will be performed on a **for Saturday evening in July during the 2011 Season.****

Gerard Schwarz, Music Director of the Eastern Music Festival since 2005, is well known for his commitment to new work and American composers. A composer himself, Schwarz has always felt strongly about commissioning and performing new work. “It is deeply satisfying, as both a conductor and performer, to bring a new piece to life,” stated Maestro Schwarz. “Especially at a festival devoted to young musicians for, I can think of no better way to celebrate the past than by embracing the future and expanding the classical repertoire. I want to thank Barbara Morgenstern for coming on board immediately to sponsor one of the commissions in memory of EMF founder Shelly Morgenstern. We look forward to others joining her.”

To celebrate its Golden Anniversary, EMF welcomes a stellar array of internationally acclaimed guest artists to its five week summer festival including Susan Graham, *mezzo-soprano*, violinists Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg, Stefan Jackiw and Caroline Couling, Julian Schwarz, *cello*, and André Watts, *piano*. In addition to performing with the Eastern Festival Orchestra, guest artists spend time teaching and interacting with the 200 young artists who attend EMF each summer. Held on the campus of Guilford College, nestled in North Carolina’s Piedmont Region, the Eastern Music Festival presents an annual summer program offering more than 100 performances and music-related events. For five weeks between June 25 – July 30, artists, faculty and students gather together in Greensboro to study, rehearse and perform the world’s greatest classical literature taught by many of the world’s most talented musicians.

EMF, founded in 1961, is an internationally-renowned classical music festival and institute for young musicians, committed to providing a well-rounded learning experience for every student. While the primary focus is orchestral and piano studies, all students are coached in chamber music, receive private lessons, and may attend optional academic music classes as part of this comprehensive approach to musical training. A vital component of the EMF experience, that no

other summer music camp can boast, is its **2:1 student/faculty ratio**. With a full faculty orchestra in residence and concerts nearly every night of the week, the level of interaction is not just limited to private lessons – students and resident faculty attend each other’s rehearsals, performances, and sometimes even take time out for a game of football! This year, the EMF faculty consists of world-class performing artists selected from top orchestras and music schools nationally and internationally including London Philharmonic, the Melbourne Symphony, the New York Philharmonic, The North Carolina Symphony, the Chicago Symphony, Vanderbilt, and Juilliard among others. Faculty hail from 21 states and six countries, including Germany, Israel, Brazil, Poland, Canada and Spain, and represent more than 31 orchestras and universities from around the world.

For nearly 50 years, the central focus of the Eastern Music Festival and School has remained the needs of the pre-professional student. The School at EMF receives over 700 applications each session, but limits enrollment to no more than 200 students, making this unique program "up close and personal," ensuring access to faculty, visiting artists and artistic staff, and creating an extremely nurturing and friendly environment. Students in 2010 represented 35 states and 8 countries, ranging from Taiwan, Germany, Bulgaria, and Switzerland to California, New York, Texas, Hawaii, and Washington.

For a complete schedule of the 2011 50th Anniversary season, visit our website at www.EasternMusicFestival.org or contact us at info@EasternMusicFestival.org.

Season tickets are currently on sale; single tickets for all events go on sale on June 1, 2011 at 10:00am. To purchase tickets, call the Eastern Music Festival Box Office at Triad Stage by calling 866.579.TIXX or 336.274.0160. Triad Stage service fees will apply to all ticket purchases made via phone or online. For a list of detailed prices and more information on tickets, including discounted and group specials, visit www.EasternMusicFestival.org.

About the Composers

Peter Boyer: Grammy-nominated composer Peter Boyer has emerged as one of the most frequently performed American orchestral composers of his generation, described by *ClassicsToday.com* as “a serious talent and a composer to watch.” His orchestral works have received over 250 public performances, by 90 orchestras. Conductor Keith Lockhart selected Boyer to commission a work celebrating the 125th anniversary of the Boston Pops, honoring the legacy of John, Robert, and Ted Kennedy. Boyer’s major and most successful work entitled *Ellis Island: The Dream of America* celebrates the historic American immigrant experience; in 2005 he earned a Grammy nomination for Best Classical Contemporary Composition for *Ellis Island*. Boyer attended Rhode Island College and went on to receive his Master of Music and Doctor of Musical Arts degrees from The Hartt School of the University of Hartford. He has taught since 1996 at Claremont Graduate University, where he holds the Helen M. Smith Chair in Music and the rank of Full Professor. To learn more about Peter Boyer visit his website at www.propulsivemusic.com.

Vivian Fung: Vivian Fung earned her doctorate from The Juilliard School in 2002, and since then has distinguished herself as one of the foremost composers of her generation. She continues to embrace non-classical influences in her work, including jazz and non-western sources; her work has been described by *The New York Times* as “evocative.” Fung has received numerous awards and grants from ASCAP, BMI, American Music Center, and the Canada Council for the Arts. In 2010 she was named a New York Foundation for the Arts (NYFA) grants recipient and

a Gregory Millard Fellow in music. Highlights of Fung's recent world premieres include: new choral works by the acclaimed Suwon Civic Chorale in Korea; *Chant* by pianist Margaret Leng Tan at the Museum of Modern Art; Piano Concerto *Dreamscapes* by pianist Jenny Lin with Metropolis Ensemble at Le Poisson Rouge in New York City; and the standing-ovation premiere of her String Quartet No. 2 commissioned by the Shanghai Quartet for its 25th anniversary season. For more information on Vivian Fung, visit her website at www.vivianfung.net.

Michael Hersch: Composer and pianist Michael Hersch studied at the Peabody Institute of Music in Baltimore, Maryland, where he currently serves on the composition faculty. In 1971, at the age of 25, he first came to international attention after winning First Prize in the American Composers Awards. His works have been conducted in the U.S. and abroad for major orchestras including Pittsburgh, Seattle, Baltimore, Atlanta, and Saint Louis, among others. In November 2010, Vanguard Classics released the second volume in a survey of Hersch's works for strings (Volume 1 was released in 2009 to great acclaim). In 2006 the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* described Hersch as "a unique voice in American music; he doesn't follow any formula, just his own potent instincts." Visit www.michaelhersch.com to learn more about Michael Hersch.

Pierre Jalbert: Originally from New Hampshire, Jalbert studied piano and composition at Oberlin Conservatory and later received his PhD in composition from the University of Pennsylvania. *The Philadelphia Inquirer* described Jalbert as "an inspired composer...Everything he writes sounds inevitable." His music tends to be tonally centered, incorporating modal, tonal and dissonant harmonies while retaining harmonic motion and arrival; in both chamber works and orchestral scores he creates timbres that are vivid yet refined. Compositions include *In Aeternam* (2001), for which he won the Rome Prize in 2000-2001; *big sky* (2005), commissioned for the Houston Symphony; *Les espaces infinis* (2001), commissioned by the Albany Symphony; and *Autumn Rhapsody* (2008), commissioned by the Vermont Symphony Orchestra. In addition to composing, Jalbert is Professor of Composition and Theory at Rice University's Shepherd School of Music in Houston, TX. For more information on Pierre Jalbert visit www.pierrejalbert.com.

Philip Rothman: Philip Rothman's compositions have been performed by the North Carolina Symphony, the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra, the Juilliard Orchestra, and the United States Military Academy Band among others. His music has been heard at major venues including Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Center as well as broadcast on more than 200 radio stations in America. Recent works include orchestrations for feature films such as *The Nanny Diaries*, *Hollywoodland* (Focus Features), and *You Don't Know Jack* (HBO Films). Rothman received a Bachelor of Music degree from Rice University and a Master of Music degree from The Juilliard School. He has earned numerous awards and honors throughout his career including four ASCAP Foundation Morton Gould Young Composer Awards, the Brian M. Israel Prize, a fellowship from the League of American Orchestras, and various grants from the American Music Center. Rothman currently serves as program advisor to the Aaron Copland Fund for Music. To learn more about Philip Rothman visit www.philiprothman.com.

More About Eastern Music Festival

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.

The Eastern Music Festival and School, founded in 1961 in Greensboro, North Carolina by Sheldon Morgenstern, is an internationally-renowned classical music festival and institute for young musicians that runs for five weeks each summer. The institute accepts students ages 14 through 22 from around the country and the world. The EMF faculty consists of world-class performing artists selected from top orchestras and music schools nationally and internationally. Gerard Schwarz serves as the music director and principal conductor for the Festival, and also serves as music director of the Seattle Symphony Orchestra. The 2011 season marks Eastern Music Festival's 50th anniversary in the Piedmont.

The 2011 Eastern Music Festival season is sponsored, in part, with support from Lincoln Financial Group, Holiday Tours, Triad Stage, The Joseph M. Bryan Foundation, Davenport, Marvin, Joyce & Co, LLP., Pennybyrn at Maryfield, McMillion Capital Management, Inc., Well•Spring Retirement Community, Steinway & Sons, and Piedmont Music Center.

SABIAN is the official cymbal of the Eastern Music Festival.

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

For more information about the Eastern Music Festival & School, visit www.EasternMusicFestival.org.

EMF is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

All contributions are tax deductible to the full extent allowed by law.

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