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**Editor's note: Photos of guest artists are available upon request**

### **The 15th annual Southeastern Piano Festival Kicks Off June 18**

World-renowned artists will highlight a week of piano performances during the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Southeastern Piano Festival, June 18- 24 in Columbia, SC. Concerts take place at the University of South Carolina Koger Center for the Arts, Johnson Performance Hall, School of Music and Trinity Cathedral. Over its 15 year-run, the festival has presented and introduced over 250 pianists to audiences that assemble from the Southeast and beyond to hear world-class piano playing.

At the opening Piano Extravaganza, fifteen pianists will perform music that spans more than 100 years, from Debussy's Clair de Lune to Bruno Mars' Uptown Funk on one to five Steinway grand pianos. The Extravaganza will also feature the Miami-based Firebirds Singers in a performance of Carl Orff's "Carmina Burana" for choir, two pianos, and percussion with Marina Lomazov and Joseph Rackers, piano soloists.

Festival guest artists include Anderson and Roe, Billboard-chart topping piano duo who have been featured on MTV, NPR and viewed millions of times on youtube; Vadim Kholodenko, gold medalist of the XVI Van Cliburn International Piano Competition; Frederic Chiu, who is described by the New York Times as a "maverick pianist" and has released more than 25 recordings and Boris Slutsky, chair of the piano department at the Peabody Conservatory of Johns Hopkins University. The artists will hold master classes each day that are free and open to the public. Concerts featuring guest artists will take place each evening.

"We are honored to celebrate the 15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the festival with such an array of talent", says festival Artistic Director Marina Lomazov, "This special year of the Southeastern Piano Festival is sure to be a week of unforgettable performances".

During the week, 20 pianists ages 13-18 from throughout the United States and will be in residence attending the master classes each day with the guest artists. At the end of the week, they will compete for \$9,000 in cash prizes and a performance as soloist with the South Carolina Philharmonic Orchestra during the Arthur Fraser International Piano Competition, which will be held from 10 a.m until 9 p.m. Friday, June 23 in the School of Music Recital Hall. The competition is free and open to the public.

"The pool of applicants this year exceeded all our expectations, both in scope and depth of talent. The Southeastern Piano Festival is a destination for the most talented young pianists in the United States and we are honored to be a part of their musical development", says Program Director Joseph Rackers.

The festival concludes with a concert featuring the prizewinners of the Arthur Fraser International Piano Competition at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, June 24 in the School of Music Recital Hall. Tickets are \$10 for the general public, \$5 for students and free for children under 18.

The 2017 Southeastern Piano Festival schedule:

Sunday, June 18

4 p.m.

Piano Extravaganza

Koger Center for the Arts

Tickets are \$20 for the general public, \$5 for students and free for children under 18.

Monday, June 19

4 p.m.

Master class and open discussion with Frederic Chiu

School of Music Recital Hall

Admission is free

7:30 p.m.

Alumni Celebration Concert

School of Music Recital Hall

Tickets are \$10 for the general public, \$5 for students and free for children under 18.

Tuesday, June 20

4 p.m.

Master class featuring USC piano students with Boris Slutsky

School of Music Recital Hall

Free

7:30 p.m.

Artist Showcase with Frederic Chiu

Trinity Cathedral

Tickets are \$20 for the general public, \$5 for students and free for children under 18.

Wednesday, June 21

1:30 p.m.

Make Music Day- SEPF on the Road  
Trinity Cathedral and The Village at Sandhill  
Free

7:30 p.m.

Artist Showcase with Vadim Kholodenko  
School of Music Recital Hall  
Tickets are \$20 for the general public, \$5 for students and free for children under 18.

Thursday, June 22

10 a.m.

Marian Stanley Tucker Lecture series  
Boris Slutsky, featuring piano students studying with members of the South Carolina Music Teachers Association  
School of Music Recital Hall  
Free

4 p.m.

Marian Stanley Tucker Lecture series  
Boris Slutsky and Vadim Kholodenko  
School of Music Recital Hall  
Free

7:30 p.m.

Artist Showcase featuring Anderson and Roe  
Johnson Performance Hall, Darla Moore School of Business  
Tickets are \$20 for the general public, \$5 for students and free for students under 18.

Friday, June 23

10 a.m.- 9 p.m.

Arthur Fraser International Piano Competition  
School of Music Recital Hall  
Free

Saturday, June 24

7:30 p.m.

Winners Concert  
School of Music Recital Hall  
Tickets are \$10 for the general public, \$5 for students and free for students under 18.