

Greenville News

ENTERTAINMENT

Musicians champion the new and unexpected

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Story Highlights

- What%3A "Then and Now%2C" a Greenville Symphony Orchestra Spotlight concert
 - When%3A 2 p.m. and 7 p.m.
 - Where%3A Centre Stage%2C 501 River St.
 - Tickets%3A %2415
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The Greenville Symphony's Spotlight concerts give local classical musicians the opportunity to champion the new, the neglected, the unexpected.

Saturday's two performances, for instance, feature a piece by Raymond Scott, an American composer best known for writing scores for Bugs Bunny, Porky Pig, Daffy Duck and other animated characters.

Scott's breezy "Boy Scout in Switzerland," to be played by a string quartet, sounds as if it could fit easily into a Bugs Bunny film.

"A lot of people may think they've never heard Raymond Scott (1908-1994) but if you have seen a cartoon, you've heard him," said Braxton Ballew, host of the Spotlight concerts.

Other works on the program, "Then and Now," strike a more serious tone but all are by lesser-known composers.

"We've got a really great spectrum of chamber music repertoire across many centuries and styles," Ballew said.

Two performances are scheduled, 2 p.m. and 7 p.m., at Centre Stage in downtown Greenville.

The Spotlight concerts generally feature the Greenville Symphony's first-chair players, who design the programs themselves.

Saturday's concerts, which feature 10 Greenville Symphony musicians, open with the Quintet for Winds by Robert Muczynski (1929-2010), a composer who synthesized a range of styles from Bernstein to Bartok and Barber.

Now in its ninth year, the Spotlight series allows musicians the chance to feature unjustly neglected composers. Joseph Eybler (1765-1846), for instance, was well known in his time but is rarely heard today. The program will include Eybler's String Quintet, published in 1801.

"Eybler was one of Mozart's students and extraordinarily well regarded," Ballew said. "I think one of the joys of chamber music is that it gives you an avenue into obscure music that maybe wouldn't get a lot of attention."

Damian Montano's Trio for Oboe, Clarinet and Bassoon is the newest piece on the program, having premiered in 2010. Montano is a bassoonist and composer who works in classical styles as well as for TV and film.

Featured musicians for the Spotlight program include Xiaoqing Yu (violin), Joanna Mulfinger Lebo (violin), Kathryn Dey (viola), Leslie Nash Kilstofte (cello), Ian Bracchitta (double bass), Caroline J. Ulrich (flute), Virginia Zeblicky Metzger (oboe), Anthony Marotta (clarinet), Amy Yang (bassoon) and Anneka A. Zuehlke-King (French horn).

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