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Music festival has a worldly beat

BY KEELY KALESKI
STAFF WRITER

World music is a happening — be part of it — Friday, May 9 when Musica Viva World Music Concerts presents *Passions* — its Festival of World Music and Dance.

"We're celebrating the passion that comes from each country's musical roots," said Ginka Gerova Ortega. "We have the passion of African Fire and Spirit, the passion of Brazilian music, samba, carnival, the passion of Latin and Spanish Flamenco."

Sheila Landis Brazilian Jazz Trio, Sunkwa African Music and Dance Ensemble, the Ortega-Herrera-Kiesler Trio, and Grupo Musical Viva are performing.

"I saw Sunkwa in Ann Arbor," said Ortega, a classically trained flutist, founder and artistic director of Musica Viva World Music Concerts. Cofi Amayaye, the artistic director of Sunkwa African Music and Dance Ensemble, has a school for African drumming and dance. "He's originally from Ghana, and is bringing the mastery of the African drum to the festival," said Ortega.

Landis draws her inspiration from classical jazz vocalists and modern

PASSIONS

What: Musica Viva World Music Concerts presents Festival of World Music and Dance, *Passions*

When: 8 p.m. Friday, May 9

Where: Smith Theatre, Oakland Community College, Orchard Ridge Campus, 27055 Orchard Lake Road, south of I-696, Farmington Hills
Tickets: \$16 advance, \$18 at door, \$20 reserved up-front seating, call (248) 522-3667

artists such as Joni Mitchell and Antonio Carlos Jobim. She's well known throughout metro Detroit, and her recordings have received extensive airplay locally and nationally.

She'll be singing and playing percussion with her trio, guitarist Rick Matle and percussionist Dennis Sheridan. They'll play bossa nova and samba at the festival.

"It's really good music," said

Matle who has performed professionally for over 15 years and earned a bachelor degree in jazz from performance from Oakland University in 1996. "It's very enduring, long lasting music."

Ortega is regarded as one of the most outstanding flutists of today, and is the recipient of the Michigan Musical Ambassador and the State of Michigan Arts Award. Her busy concert schedule takes her all over the world.

In addition to performing, she's been composing and arranging music based on Latin and Flamenco rhythms.

"Sometimes it starts like a Bach Fugue then goes into a Flamenco Seguirilla, which is one of the most complex Flamenco rhythms. I'm finding that I am a bridge between classical and Flamenco. We are pushing limits and are creating a new language based on classics, world music and Flamenco. All of us are collaborating."

The festival is an annual event, and Ortega enjoys sharing her music with the audience and working with other musicians.

"All of us are equally passionate about our music," said Ortega. "I'm really fascinated by how much talent



The Ortega-Herrera-Kiesler Trio, (from left) Ginka Gerova Ortega, flute, Juan Herrera, guitar, and Emily Kiesler, cello, will perform at *Passions*, Festival of World Music and Dance.

is here. The music is so alive, it's beyond itself. I'm always looking for something different. I feel that I must create a stage for people, other

talent, young talent, to be discovered to be given a voice."

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Composer reawakens classical side in world premiere

BY LINDA ANN CHROMIN
STAFF WRITER

Joseph LoDuca is stretching his musical wings with his latest composition for Detroit Chamber Winds & Strings.

Impromptu, a work for oboe, percussion and guitar, reawakens the Bloomfield Hills composer's classical side.

LoDuca wrote classical music during his studies at Wayne State University, but that was years before he became an Emmy Award-winning film composer. LoDuca's had a long and varied career. Many will remember him as a 15-year-old guitarist warming up crowds for acts like Bob Seger, Jeff Beck and Ted Nugent.

LoDuca grew up in East Detroit in the late 1960s and began playing in rock bands at age 12. Later he went on to study jazz and classical music at the University of Michigan and privately in New York. It was in Greenwich Village that he played classical guitar and jazz in clubs. Before long he was performing in jazz festivals in Europe and exploring music from around the world. But LoDuca never lost his love for composing. A director friend suggested he try scoring films.

LoDuca began composing music for films such as *Evil Dead I and II* and the televi-



Joseph LoDuca's latest composition *Impromptu* will be performed by Detroit Chamber Winds & Strings.

sion series *Xena: Warrior Princess* and *Hercules: The Incredible Journeys*. The industry took note of his writing awarding him a Primetime Emmy, 13 regional Emmys, several ASCAP awards and named him horror film composer of the year. Now LoDuca

is switching musical styles once more.

Detroit Chamber Winds & Strings and oboist Donald Baker present the world premiere of his *Impromptu* Sunday, May 4, at Birmingham Unitarian Church.

"It's an ensemble and a way of doing things I haven't done before. It was written in an improvisational spirit. It's the same approach I use for film. I ask what's the setting and who are the characters?" said LoDuca. "I'm not necessarily a classical composer. I bring other elements into play. I use color the way film composers use color. I wanted to bring some of that into this with unlikely pairings — non-standard instrument combinations. The first movement the percussionist is playing on a clay pot. Later it's on a Darabuka, a Middle Eastern and North African drum."

As much as LoDuca enjoyed writing *Impromptu* he isn't ready to trade film scoring for classical music just yet. Before the concert, he will play film clips without music so the audience can see the blank canvases with which a composer works. Then he'll talk about the process of scoring films.

LoDuca developed an appre-

ciation for literature and stories while a student at University of Michigan in Ann Arbor.

It was exactly the background he needed to become a film composer.

"When you're writing for film you have to respond quickly to a deadline but it gets heard quickly," said LoDuca who's currently composing music for

Peacemakers, a mystery-solving series set in 1870s Colorado with Tom Berenger for USA TV. "It's one of the great advantages of film composition. That and being able to make a living and remain in Michigan. It's nice to be part of the community."

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DETROIT CHAMBER WINDS & STRINGS

What: Perform the world premiere of Joseph LoDuca's *Impromptu*, a work for oboe, strings and percussion

When: 7 p.m. Sunday, May 4. Pre-concert talk by LoDuca at 6:15 p.m.

Where: Birmingham Unitarian Church, 651 N. Woodward Ave. at Lone Pine Road

Tickets: \$25, \$19 seniors and students, call (248) 559-2095

BBSO salutes May with concert

Show your support for the Birmingham-Bloomfield Symphony Orchestra this month.

Attend their concert on Sunday — or May 9 fund-raiser — or both.

Sunday's concert begins 6:30 p.m. with a pre-concert lecture by Linette Popoff-Parks, chairwoman of the Madonna University music department. You'll be lifted out of your seat with excitement by this program of virtuosic musical fireworks.

The BBSO titled this concert *A Salute to the Musicians of the BBSO* because many of its members will perform solos throughout the program. Hai Xi Wu, BBSO concertmaster, will perform Tchaikovsky's *Violin Concerto in D Major*.

Also on the program is Shostakovich's *Festive Overture*, Tchaikovsky's *Violin*

Concerto, and the Berlioz "Symphonie Fantastique."

The BBSO's fund-raiser, Friday, May 9, at the Townsend Hotel in Birmingham, features a gourmet dinner, entertainment by Alexander Zonjic and Friends, and silent and live auctions.

After dinner, Zonjic and Rich Tropea, BBSO's board chairman, will auction off

some of the more valuable items donated to benefit the symphony.

Items range from \$10 to \$1,500 and include golf packages, gift baskets of beauty resort packages, and dinners gift certificates. Zonjic has donated a basket of Zonjic CDs and goodies.

This event is the major money-maker for the BBSO every year.



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