

# AMERICAN BALALAIKA SYMPHONY

## PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release:

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### **American Balalaika Symphony Performs in Alexandria, VA**

ALEXANDRIA, VA – On Saturday, February 23, 2008, the American Balalaika Symphony (ABS), under the artistic direction of Peter Trofimenko, will present its Winter concert at 7:30 p.m. at the Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall and Arts Center, on the Northern Virginia Community College campus, 3001 North Beauregard Street, Alexandria, VA 22311. Joining ABS for the first time in an American performance are musicians from the Gnessin Academy of Music in Moscow.

The Symphony's Winter concert is a unique program that includes two rarely heard Russian masterpieces, the *Concerto No. 3 in D Major for Piano and Orchestra* by Dmitry Kabalevsky (1904-1987), and *Symphony No. 2* in four movements by Vasily Sergeyevich Kalinnikov (1866-1901). The *Concerto No. 3* will be performed by virtuoso Elena Ulyanova on piano.

This is the first time the Kalinnikov *Symphony No. 2* will be performed by a balalaika orchestra in the United States.

Nine faculty and students from the prestigious Gnessin Academy of Music in Moscow will join the American Balalaika Symphony and soloist Elena Ulyanova for this special performance. The students, who play a variety of Russian instruments including the balalaika, domra, and bayan, are visiting the United States for the first time.

Other program selections include the atmospheric and soulful *Nocturne* by Konstantyn Miaskov; a dance-inspired version of the old Russian folksong, *Semyonovna*, by E. Kuznetsov; and *Wild Flowers* by V. Temnov, an original composition that evokes the coming of the Russian spring. Also included is Isaak Dunayevsky's (1900-1955) *Overture to The Children of Captain Grant*, a 1936 Soviet adventure film based on the novel by Jules Verne.

Considered the premier Soviet composer, Isaac Dunayevsky remains extremely popular and famous in Russia but is virtually unknown in the United States. Dunayevsky's hard-driving *Overture* – a concert piece in its own right – draws listeners into the world of breathless sea-faring adventures, brave heroes and sunny oceanscapes. The romantic *Overture* is deservedly considered a masterpiece of Soviet music.

(more)

Founded in 2001, the Washington, D.C.-area American Balalaika Symphony performs a range of music from folk to symphonic. A balalaika orchestra is similar to a traditional symphony orchestra, but uses Russian plucked string instruments, such as the balalaika and domra, rather than Western bowed instruments such as the violin and cello. The orchestra's distinctive sound is rounded out by instruments such as the bayan (Russian button accordion), gusli (an ancient Russian table harp), cimbalom (similar to a hammered dulcimer), and full wind and percussion sections.

The American Balalaika Symphony is comprised of an internationally diverse mix of professional and amateur musicians from the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area.

Founder, artistic director and conductor Peter Trofimenko was classically trained in Kiev in balalaika performance, conducting, arrangement and composition. He moved to the United States in 1993. By sharing his artistic vision and musical knowledge, Mr. Trofimenko has created a unique orchestral group that embraces the rich traditions of the Russian Music School, while drawing on the best of European and American musical traditions.

For more information, visit the ABS website at: [www.balalaika.biz](http://www.balalaika.biz).

### **Concert Details**

**Date:** Saturday, February 23, 2008

**Place:** Rachel M. Schlesinger Hall Concert Hall and Arts Center  
Northern Virginia Community College, Alexandria Campus  
3001 North Beauregard Street  
Alexandria, Virginia 22311

**Time:** 7:30 P.M.

**Tickets:** General Admission: \$20 in advance/\$25 at the door  
Seniors and students: \$15.00  
Groups of five or more in advance: \$15.00 each  
Cash or checks only at the door;  
Tickets may be charged online at [www.balalaika.biz](http://www.balalaika.biz),  
or by calling 703-351-1331

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