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IWU School of Music to Celebrate Shostakovich's 100th Birthday

September 13, 2006

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. -- Illinois Wesleyan University's School of Music will celebrate symphonist Dmitri Shostakovich's 100th birthday with a concert on Sunday, Sept. 24, at 3 p.m. in the Westbrook Auditorium of Presser Hall, 1210 N. Park St., in Bloomington. The concert will feature all student performers playing Shostakovich compositions either as solos, as part of an ensemble, or in the chamber orchestra, conducted by Vadim Mazo, associate professor of music.

The event is free and open to the public.

A Leningrad native, Shostakovich spent his entire musical career within Russia's Communist System. Many of his operas received criticism from Soviet authorities and he received two official denunciations of his music in 1936 and 1948 and the periodic banning of his work. Still, Shostakovich was named the most popular Soviet composer of his generation, receiving a number of accolades and awards. Also, he wrote 36 film scores including those for prize-winning films such as *Encounter at the Elbe* and *The Fall of Berlin*.

Critics note that Shostakovich's music is quite distinctive in that it represents a synthesis of elements from different musical periods. Classical in structure, his music is also highly romantic yet will frequently use frivolity or a course, biting sarcasm to make its point. Shostakovich produced a wide variety of symphonies, concertos, chamber music pieces, ballets, operas, cantatas and oratorios in his lifetime.

For additional information, contact the IWU School of Music at (309) 556-3061.

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