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NEWS RELEASE

WORKING AT UD, BOSNIAN COMPOSER BRINGS MUSIC OF PEACE TO DAYTON AUDIENCE

"There's a light and shimmering thread that encircles and unites us all in this fine and glittering web."
From "Shimmering Thread" by Edin Dino Zonic and Mustafa Tanovic

DAYTON, Ohio - Though his instruments and composing tools were destroyed by the bombs of war, the heart and soul of Edin Dino Zonic's music could not be crushed. From the ravages of war-torn Bosnia, it survived, flourished, and was recreated stronger and better than before.

The same may be said for the composer.

Zonic, a professor of composition and conducting in Sarajevo and Croatia before bringing his family to Dayton in late August, has devoted most of his energies in the last few weeks preparing for an inspirational "Concert for Peace" to be held at 8 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 13, at Memorial Hall in Dayton. The concert, featuring the Dayton and Sarajevo philharmonic orchestras, will be held in conjunction with activities commemorating the fourth anniversary of the 1995 Dayton Peace Accords project that ended the Bosnian war.

Zonic has been working with Bruce Hitchner, director of the Center for International Programs at the University of Dayton and coordinator of the anniversary events, most of which will take place at the Dayton Convention Center Nov. 11 - 13. Aside from the arduous task of coordinating travel for 60 musicians from several European countries, Zonic had to transcribe his "Shimmering Thread" - a musical message of hope and peace - which will close the commemorative concert.

Zonic said he composed the piece in Sarajevo in 1993 for his 45-member, multi-ethnic Sarajevo Circle artistic group, which performed "Shimmering Thread" many times in Europe during and after the war. In August 1996, when Hitchner was looking for non-traditional music for the first anniversary celebration of the Dayton Peace Accords, friends directed him to Zonic and the Sarajevo Circle.

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"The traditional music of Bosnia had become tinged with the extreme nationalism of the country," Hitchner said. "I was looking for music that emphasized many cultures and the musical voice of freedom and tolerance. Dino was the only musician in Bosnia to compose music based on the siege and his experiences during the siege."

Three months later, the Circle performed "Shimmering Thread" for the first time in Dayton. They performed it again during anniversary events in 1997. One year later, Zonic called and asked Hitchner to sponsor him in his quest to start a new life in the United States.

In the short time since his Dayton arrival with his wife, Julia, who was first voice in the Sarajevo Circle, and their infant daughter, Pia, Zonic has already begun building a name for himself as a musician and composer. Aside from his upcoming performance at the "Concert for Peace," Zonic has already been booked to perform in concert at Carnegie Hall in the spring.

Hitchner described with enthusiasm the evolution of "Shimmering Thread," borne of Zonic's yearning for peace in his Sarajevo hometown, into a fully-orchestrated concert piece fit for the stage at Memorial Hall. "What's so exciting is that Dino's music will now be performed as the finale, in concert and with two orchestras," he said.

Zonic was equally excited in his announcement that a total of 370 artists - including members of both orchestras and a chorus - would fill the stage to bring dramatic life to "Shimmering Thread."

To facilitate the performance, Zonic had to re-score his music for symphony orchestra. He accomplished the task in record time - less than a week, Hitchner said - with student guidance in using tools available in one of the University's computerized music labs.

Though his musical equipment and studio were destroyed by bombing, Zonic's spirit remains undaunted and, in fact, is growing with his new sense of freedom here in the United States.

"I want to show people that, although I lost everything in the war, that is not a reason for me to become a bad guy, or to give up," Zonic said. "War taught me a very expensive lesson to respect life. And through music, maybe we can all find a way to understanding."

Zonic said he is hoping to find the funds to purchase a computer in time to compose a rhapsody for the new millennium.

"I would call it 'Rhapsody of the New World' to express how I see the new world after 2000," he said. "It would be comprised of three parts - the first part representing the energy of the male, the second part representing the energy of the female and the third part representing the creative energy that would come from the fusion of the first two, whether you would call it energy or God or child or hope."

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Though there are sometimes frustrating details to be attended to in starting life in a foreign country, Zonic said he and his family are happy to call Dayton home.

Hitchner said he has welcomed Zonic's presence at UD as well as his friendship.

"We share the same visions, values and the common goal to bring true peace and true reconciliation and a true multicultural atmosphere to Bosnia," he said. "Dino is now a Daytonian and part of the UD family. And at the end of the day, this is not just a story about the "Concert for Peace" or the Dayton Peace Accords, it's about the fact that we now have someone in our midst who enriches us and expands our horizons. My hope is that he will someday find a place on staff here at the University. He is a natural teacher."

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For media interviews, call **Edin Dino Zonic** or **Bruce Hitchner** at (937) 229-3526.