

David Kováč promotes string music to youth

David Kováč became the associate professor of violin/viola at East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, Tennessee, two years ago. He began to play violin when he was 4 and went to high school at the Janacek Conservatory in the Czech Republic. He then came to the U.S. to study music. He received his undergraduate degree from Longy School of Music, Cambridge, Massachusetts, and a master's degree from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, Massachusetts. He received his doctorate from the University of Missouri-Kansas City Conservatory, Kansas City, Missouri.

Before he came to ETSU, he lived in Kansas City and was the artistic co-director at Heartland Chamber Music. "We provided opportunities for young musicians to play chamber music and string chamber orchestra in several year around programs and during the Summer Chamber Music Festival," he says.

Since coming to ETSU, he has started two chamber orchestras: East Tennessee State University Chamber Orchestra and Sinfonia Chamber Orchestra. College and advanced high school students can audition for the ETSU chamber orchestra. Younger students can audition for the Sinfonia.

About David Kováč

Dr. David Kováč maintains a varied career as a violist, artistic director, chamber musician and instructor of violin and viola. He was appointed as assistant professor of violin and viola at East Tennessee State University in 2016.

He has collaborated with members of the Miami String Quartet, the Rosamunde Trio, the Appalachia Piano Trio, New Ear Ensemble (a Kansas City based new music ensemble), and members of the Philadelphia Orchestra, BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, Israel Philharmonic Orchestra, Kansas City Symphony, Chicago Symphony, Czech National Symphony Orchestra and other orchestras around the United States and Europe.

Other chamber music collaborations include performances with faculty at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst, Stony Brook University, University of Missouri-Kansas City, Park University's International Center for Music, University of Tennessee, University of

Students can also take chamber music classes at ETSU.

"I hope to grow the string and chamber music program at ETSU together with my colleague Sean Hawthorne and establish a strong string tradition," he says.

Kováč is the conductor of the Symphony of the Mountains Youth Orchestra. "I would like to see The Symphony of the Mountains Youth Orchestra grow and bring in students from across the Tri-Cities and the region. I am hoping to expand the collaboration with local youth ensembles, colleges and universities," he says.

The Youth Orchestra performs in the "From Brass to Brahms" concert Oct. 20 at 7:30 p.m. at the Toy F. Reid Employee Center, Kingsport, Tenn. They join the Voices of the Mountains Oct. 28 for a concert at 3 p.m., in Kingsport. Their Fall Concert is held Nov. 4 at 3 p.m. in Seeger Chapel at Milligan College, Johnson City, Tennessee. They join in the Classical Masters concert at Paramount Center for the Arts, Bristol, Tennessee, Feb. 2 at 7:30 p.m. Their Spring Concert is April 7 at 3 p.m., in Kingsport and April 8 at 10:30 a.m. at the McGlothlin Center for the Arts, Emory, Va.

Kansas and University of Nevada Las Vegas.

He has performed as the featured soloist with the Kansas City Civic Orchestra in Mozart's "Sinfonia Concertante" and has collaborated in opera productions with the renowned Mark Morris Dance Company.

In 2009 Dr. Kováč performed the world premiere of Gabriela Lena Frank's "Puntos Suspensivos" at the Joyce Theatre in New York City. The work was commissioned in part by the performing arts series, "Works and Process" at the Guggenheim Museum.

That same year he co-founded the Stringendo Chamber Music Program as part of the Heartland Music Academy in Mission, Kansas. The year-round program is designed to coach new and beginning chamber ensembles. His work with the Heartland Music Academy also included coaching the Heartland Virtuosi and Camerata Chamber orchestras. He remains artistic director of the Heartland Chamber Music



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He is also a guest artist with the Paramount Chamber Players. Craig Combs, founder, says, "David Kováč is a consummate musician both as a performer and teacher as evidenced by both his personal performances and the extraordinary quality of his student ensembles. When he came to East Tennessee with his family, he brought with him a worldview in the field of classical music. His presence in our communities has encouraged our persistent pursuit of excellence in the presentation of chamber music in our communities. The Paramount Chamber Players has

enjoyed his work twice as a violist in the Piano Quartet op. 25 of Brahms and the Piano Quartet op. 16 of Beethoven. We very much look forward to his continued collaboration with TPCP in the next season in the Schumann Piano Quintet set to be performed in May."

"I enjoy both teaching and performing. I believe that good balance of performing and teaching is important. As a teacher, I enjoy watching students grow into young musicians," Kováč says. *A!*

Festival, an internationally renowned summer program for young musicians that draws students and faculty from across the world.

His former students have included the concertmaster of the Kansas City Youth Symphony and the Boston Youth Symphony Orchestra, as well as first prize winners at the Kansas Music Teachers Association State competitions and winners of the Kansas chapter of the Music Teacher's National Association competition.

His students have received scholarships to numerous prestigious schools and summer programs, including the Walnut Hill School for the Arts in Natick, Massachusetts, Pepperdine University, McGill University, University of Tulsa, University of Dallas, University of Nebraska at Lincoln, Park University, Killington Chamber Music Festival and the Tanglewood Chamber Music Festival.

He has previously taught at the Dana Hall School of Music in Wellesley, Massachusetts, the Brattleboro Music

Center in Vermont, and the University of Missouri-Kansas City Conservatory of Music and Dance. He regularly serves as an adjudicator at for a variety of local, state, and national festivals and competitions.

Dr. Kováč began his musical studies on violin at the age of 4 in his home country, the Czech Republic. Later, at the Janáček Conservatory in Ostrava, he chose the viola as his main instrument. He completed his Bachelor of Music as a scholarship student at the Longy School of Music in Boston and received his Master of Music in viola performance from the University of Massachusetts-Amherst, where he served as a graduate assistant in chamber music and orchestra. In 2002, Dr. Kováč became the violist in the Graduate Fellowship String Quartet at UMKC, where he completed the Doctor of Musical Arts in viola performance. He has studied with Pavel Vitek, Michelle LaCourse and Scott Lee, and his chamber music coaches have included Benjamin Zander, Charles Treger, Sonya Monosoff, Katherine Murdock, Eric Stumacher and Robert Marfeld. *A!*