



Alexander Tentser, BDAA 2014 Orchestra Conductor

by Dan Nicolini

The BDAA Board of Directors is pleased to announce that Dr. Alexander Tentser of Tucson, Arizona will be conductor of the 2014 BDAA Festival Orchestra at our convention in Kalamazoo, Michigan. Dr. Tentser brings a wealth of talent and experience as a concert pianist and orchestra conductor, including an extensive familiarity with the genres of both the Russian classical and folk music traditions.

Born in Kiev, Ukraine, Alex (“Sasha”) grew up hearing his accordionist father playing and singing Russian folk music. Sasha began studying piano and was accepted at age six into the Ukraine State School for Gifted Children. After an acclaimed performance of Grieg’s Piano Concerto, his musical education continued at age fifteen at the renowned Gnesin Music Institute in Moscow where he was a student of Professor Theodore Gutmann. His balalaika and domra-playing roommates expanded his interest in the repertoire of those instruments. He then toured with the Siberian Philharmonic Violin Ensemble as both accompanist and solo pianist, performing in most republics of the former Soviet Union.

Sasha immigrated to the United States, and in 1991 was offered a full scholarship for doctoral studies at the University of Arizona School of Music. He studied orchestral conducting under renowned maestro Jorge Mester, director of the Aspen Music Festival, the Mexico Philharmonic, and other orchestras. He completed his music doctorate in 1996, winning the President’s Concerto Competition. He has since performed many times as a piano soloist with the Tucson Symphony and the Lake Placid, New York Sinfonietta, as well as with other orchestras and chamber music ensembles. Dr. Tentser has been a member of

the music faculty at the University of Arizona, Cochise Community College, and Pima Community College, where he has served as conductor of the Pima College Orchestra for many years, presenting a variety of classical and modern music.

Dr. Tentser has conducted the Arizona Balalaika Orchestra in its annual major concerts for over ten years, bringing his personal knowledge of Russian classical and folk music and his remarkably well-tuned “conductor’s ear” to heighten the quality of the Orchestra’s performances. He is also an engaging music lecturer and accomplished composer, presenting informative preconcert talks for Interpreti Veneziani Baroque Ensemble from Italy and the Academy of St. Martin in the Fields from England. He has served as co-chair, guest lecturer and piano soloist at Symposiums on Music and Medicine at both the University of Arizona and at Indiana-Purdue University.

Fluent in both Russian and English, Alex Tentser brings a delightful and engaging fresh perspective to our Festival Orchestra in 2014. He and the convention coordinators are currently making music selections, and promise to offer a varied and pleasing mix of classical and folk melodies for our members to perform and our audience to enjoy!

Alex’s website: <http://www.tentser.com>