# Tchivzhel to continue at GSO

## Conductor signs new five-year contract

**By Ann Hicks**
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Conductor Edvard Tchivzhel says he's delighted with the prospect of continued music making with the Greenville Symphony Orchestra, which he has led with distinction since 1999.

Tchivzhel has signed a new five-year contract with the 62-year-old GSO. He will continue as its artistic director and conductor through June 2014.

Over the next five years, Tchivzhel says he sees the orchestra becoming "the best in the state."

Since he took the position in 1999, the orchestra has increased the number of concerts it offers each season and boosted both attendance and revenue. "I took it with certain hopes," he says, "but what happened exceeded all my expectations. Soon we were able to increase the number of masterworks concerts, as well as our chamber music concerts, not to mention attendance at our concerts, which meant appreciable increase in revenue."

Today, the GSO offers its audiences six masterworks and four chamber music concerts at the Peace Center for the Performing Arts. Other additions include the orchestra's Christmas Holiday program, a Fourth of July pops concert and three Spotlight Series concerts, an hour of chamber music in a casual setting.

The orchestra also has bolstered its reputation by attracting world-renowned guest soloists, including superstar cellist Yo-Yo Ma, who performed with the GSO in 2004 and earlier this year.

Tchivzhel plans to continue to broaden the GSO's repertoire while maintaining a balance between well-known and less familiar compositions. He says he finds today's audiences more receptive to less familiar works than in the past.



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Edvard Tchivzhel says he hopes to continue building the Greenville Symphony Orchestra's reputation.

"I find that as Greenville continues to grow through attracting better educated people from all parts of this country, our audiences' expectation of the orchestra's ability to create great music also grows," he says.

Currently, most of the GSO musicians are hired per-service, which means the symphony faces stiff competition for top-tier musicians in the region. Tchivzhel's longer term goals include raising the musicians' fee to be regionally competitive and also continuing to increase the orchestra's salaried positions to cover all 17 principal chairs. Currently, the GSO has 11 salaried positions.

The Leningrad-born and educated maestro looks back on a quarter-century career that began in the 1970s when, as a student, he won the Third Soviet Conductor's Competition in Moscow. He became assistant conductor of the Leningrad Philharmonic, working alongside his mentor, Yevgeni Mravinsky. In the 1980s, Tchivzhel established an international reputation, conducting orchestras around the world, from England to Australia. He defected to the United States 1991, at the conclusion of a U.S. tour of the State Russian Symphony Orchestra.

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