



THE Summerylen TIMES

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Artist Feature - Dr. Sheri-Marcia Damon

Raised in Winston-Salem, trombonist, arranger, and professor Dr. Sheri-Marcia Damon is a North Carolina musical treasure. Dr. Damon's musical career began like that of many Summerylen students, when she signed up for school band in fifth grade. Today, she is a respected professional musician and educator who makes people's lives better with music.

Damon began her band career on clarinet, but soon decided to switch to trombone--so that she could sit beside a cute boy in band class! While Damon's crush didn't last, her love for playing trombone continued to grow, and through musical study she gained skills that have helped her become an excellent musician, teacher, and person.

As a 7th grader, Damon developed a love for arranging, or adapting music for various combinations of instruments. With help from her band director John Shelton, she arranged her first piece, Muhammad Ali's theme "The Greatest," and led her band in performing the piece in concert. Throughout her career, Damon has used her arranging skills to help others learn music. "The good thing about being able to arrange music is...I can arrange music to teach my students that they can sound good even in small groups," Damon says. When a young woodwind trio performed one of her arrangements in competition, they earned a Superior rating and the surprise of the judge, who believed the students were much older than they really were! Damon's arrangements of African-American spirituals and folk songs have been performed by trombone choirs, jazz bands, and concert bands around the world.

Every musician, including Dr. Damon, has encountered hurdles that make it tempting to quit playing. When times got tough, Damon chose to press on and become a better musician. During her high school career, unfairness reared its head--although Damon sat first chair, the director only chose boys in lower chairs to take to competitions. Instead of giving up, Damon auditioned for NC School of Arts and won a full scholarship. However, in her first lesson there, her teacher remarked that he knew "twelve-year-olds who played better" than she did, and that she must completely change her embouchure to play trombone well. The comment broke Damon's heart, but inspired her to keep growing as a musician. Her embouchure change was so drastic that she lost the ability to play all but 5 notes on her trombone, but with practice and dedication, she was able to regain and strengthen her abilities. A year later, Damon performed a successful audition for admittance to UNC-Greensboro, where she began her college career. By learning from her difficulties, Damon developed perseverance that helped her become a great trombonist.

In her undergraduate studies at UNC-Greensboro and Cleveland Institute of Music, Damon learned the value of finding supportive trombone teachers to help her achieve her musical goals. Her teachers Hal Reynolds, who now teaches at Ithaca, and the late Robert Boyd, who was principal trombonist of the Cleveland Orchestra for nearly 50 years, provided excellent examples for Damon to strive toward as a trombonist and teacher.

After earning her Bachelor of Music degree in 1986, Damon joined the Navy and studied at the Armed Forces School of Music. Playing throughout her naval career, Damon served in several Navy Bands at Norfolk, VA, and even sang in a rock band on the side! In the Navy, Damon developed valuable skills that helped her succeed, including the discipline to follow instructions.



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Summer Music Camp Preview

The Basics on 3 North Carolina Summer Music Camps



ECU Band Camp - June 15-20, 2008

What it's got: concert bands, jazz combo, jazz big band, improvisation, sectionals, clinics, & private lessons.

Cost: \$395 (\$15 extra for optional private lesson)

Ages: 12 through high school

Find out more:

<http://www.ecu.edu/cs-cfac/music/summer/band/>

What we've heard: Students say they love the variety of experiences this camp offers; parents love the faculty supervision and selection of musical & social activities.

UNCG Summer Music Camp - July 13-18 or July 20-25

What it's got: concert bands, sectionals, and lessons.

Cost: \$395 (add \$15 for 1/2 hour lesson, \$30 for 1 hour)

Ages: Grades 5-12

Find out more: <http://www.smcamp.org>

What we've heard: Christina attended grad school while this camp was in session, and noticed some negative behavior among campers due to lack of supervision. Reviews from our past students have been mixed--some really enjoyed it, while others were not impressed.

UNC-Pembroke Summer Drum Daze - July 26, 2008

What it's got: special focus on marching percussion

Cost: FREE!

Ages: High school

Find out more: Contact Tracy Wiggins at 910-522-5705 or email her at tracy.wiggins@uncp.edu

What we've heard: It's new to us, but sounds very cool!

Western NC Music Camp - June 22-27 at UNC-Asheville.

What it's got: Concert bands, Jazz Bands, Music Theory, Improvisation, Conducting, Clinics and Private Lessons

Cost: \$395 (add \$20 for 1/2 hour lesson, \$40 for 1 hour)

Ages: middle & high school students

Find out more: <http://www.unca.edu/music/camp/index.html>

What we've heard: Also new to us...but Asheville is great in the summer!

Sheri-Marcia Damon, continued

Being willing to listen and follow instructions is something Damon considers "very important, and not only if you want to make a living as a musician." Damon adds, "As long you're not asked to do something wrong, you have to follow instructions to succeed in life." After leaving the Navy, Damon used the discipline she had learned to achieve the highest levels of musical knowledge, earning her Master's degree, teaching licensure, and Doctor of Musical Arts degree from UNC-Greensboro in 1999. Damon then set out to share her musical understanding with others by becoming a teacher.

After teaching for a year in North Dakota, Damon returned to North Carolina and taught band at Chewning Middle School in Durham for five years. Since August 2005, Damon has served as Director of Instrumental Music for Mount Olive College. In a college that formerly offered only voice and piano instruction, Damon has established an Instrumental Music program complete with symphonic band, jazz combo, pep band, chamber orchestra, a Music Education degree, and plans for flute and percussion groups. Throughout her teaching career, Damon has used her musical experiences and arranging skills to help students excel and build healthy music programs in schools.

When asked how to become a better musician, Damon suggests playing in small groups. "It helps you count better, listen better, and feel better about yourself and what you can do. When you go to a big band out of a small group, you feel more confident." But perhaps the best advice Dr. Damon can give lies within her own musical experience: never giving up, being willing to listen, and using your talents to help others.

Rest in Peace. Ella

Summerglen's beloved mascot, Ella the Jazz Cat, has passed away.

During the first week of March, Ella's health abruptly declined as a result of advanced kidney disease. One of her kidneys failed, and the other was badly damaged. Ella was put to rest on Sunday, March 9 at the After Hours Animal Hospital. She was ten years old.

Ella has been a member of Christina and Andrew's family since 2002, when Christina adopted her from the pound. She earned her name because of the way she sang along with an Ella Fitzgerald CD as Christina drove her home for the first time. An outgoing, friendly, and beautiful cat, Ella won many friends in her lifetime with her charming personality. She also was a fixture at Summerglen Music studio, where she found great pleasure in sitting on students' family members during lessons. Ella will be greatly missed, and joyfully remembered.

To see some cute pictures of Ella, visit her webpage at <http://www.summerglen-music.com/ella.html>



Concert Calendar

Some family-friendly concerts in the Triangle area

Wednesday, March 12 at 7pm - Holly Springs Cultural Center

Free concert by the United States Air Force Heritage Brass Quintet

Sunday, March 16 at 3pm - Carolina Theatre in Durham

Chamber Orchestra of the Triangle with Alex Fiterstein, clarinet, and John Pruett, viola. \$20 for adults, free for students. Must-see for clarinetists!

<http://www.chamberorchestraofthetriangle.org>

Friday, March 21 at 8pm - Baldwin Auditorium at Duke (East Campus)

Free concert by the Duke Djembe Ensemble

Friday, March 21 at 7pm - Peace Presbyterian Church in Cary

Good Friday service with the Ascension Trombone Choir

Saturday, March 22 at 8pm - Meymandi Hall in Raleigh

Triangle Youth Brass Band concert. \$10 for adults, \$5 for students

<http://www.trianglebrass.org>

Wednesday, March 26 at 8pm - Carolina Theatre in Durham

Innovative bass player Victor Wooten

Thursday, March 27 at 7:30pm - Memorial Hall at UNC Chapel Hill

Modern Latin American Art Music--featuring COOL MUSIC by Villa-Lobos and Ginastera!! There is a pre-show discussion starting at 6:15. \$15

<http://music.unc.edu/festivalonthehill2008/index.htm>

Sunday, March 30 at 5:30 pm - The Arts Center in Carrboro

Free evening of Latin music featuring Orquesta GarDel, Tangos Para Recordar, In the Pocket Latin jazz ensemble, and Rey Norteño. Check out:

<http://music.unc.edu/festivalonthehill2008/index.htm>

Summerglen LIVE!

You already know that Summerglen is a great place for music lessons, but did you know that we offer live musical performances, too?



Christina and Andrew perform together as the Summerglen Duo. Known as "The life of the quiet get-together," the Summerglen Duo performs jazz and light classical favorites for weddings, dinner parties, and open houses.

Ask us how we can make your next event special!

