

# Rhonda Larson & VENTUS Take Belarusians on Music Travel Through Time and Space



Rhonda Larson & VENTUS play at the Belarusian State Philharmonic Society

On their visit to Belarus on October 9-13, 2011 U.S. Grammy-winning flutist Rhonda Larson and her band VENTUS performed their beloved genre of world music with exceptional passion and musicianship. This was Rhonda Larson's second tour in Belarus, sponsored by the U.S. Embassy to present the diverse U.S. musical scene to Belarusian audiences.

The Belarusian audience gave a standing ovation to Rhonda Larson & VENTUS at their October 11 show at the Belarusian State Philharmonic Society in Minsk. Introducing the American performers, Acting Chargé d'Affaires Christopher Panico quoted from President Obama's Proclamation on the occasion of the National Arts and Humanities Month that "great works of literature, theater, dance, fine art, and music reach us through a universal language that unites us regardless of background, gender, race, or creed." Rhonda Larson and her band spoke that language like few others could, playing a unique rendition of a traditional Belarusian folk song "Kupalinka" along with other tunes from many ages and cultures.

Rhonda Larson & VENTUS' program in Belarus also included interaction with music students and faculty at the Belarusian State Academy of Music in Minsk where the American musicians gave a master class to over 120 participants. The Teacher Training Branch of the Music Academy in the city of Mogilev hosted a solo performance by Ms. Larson, entitled "One Woman, a World of Music." The show, followed by a stimulating Q&A session, brought together over 300 music students and faculty, who truly appreciated this unique cultural exposure.