

## Armando Ghitalla Foundation Awards \$15,000 & Presents First Berkshire Brass Spectacular

**3 Days at The Colonial Theatre, Pittsfield MA**  
In the Berkshires—“America’s Premier Cultural Destination”

- Hosted by the Award-Winning Empire Brass Quintet
- Free Concert by US Coast Guard Band
- Performances by 7 Jazz & Brass Ensembles
- Free “Meet the Brass” Family Concert
- Conn-Selmer Inc. Brass Instrument Display

**When: September 29—30, & October 1, 2006**  
See attached 2006 Berkshire Brass Spectacular Schedule

**Where: The Colonial Theatre**  
111 South Street | Pittsfield, MA

**Admission & Information:** \$25 | \$42.50 | \$55 for admission all 3 days.  
Tickets are transferable. “Meet the Brass” Family Concert & Closing Concert by US Coast Guard Band are FREE, but preference for admission will be given to weekend ticket holders. For tickets & info, the public should call 413.997.4444.

**Press contact:** For more information or press tickets, contact Christina Jensen at 347.229.4613 | christinajensen@earthlink.net or Jessie Virgilio, Colonial Theatre Public Relations Manager, at 413.448.8084 ext 12 | jvirgilio@thecolonialtheatre.org



September 5, 2006—Pittsfield, MA—On September 29, 30 and October 1, 2006 the **Armando Ghitalla Foundation** will present the first-ever, three-day **Berkshire Brass Spectacular** at the historic **Colonial Theatre** (Pittsfield, MA). The festival will feature performances by more than seven brass and jazz ensembles, and this year will be hosted by the critically-acclaimed and internationally renowned **Empire Brass** quintet. The Berkshire Brass Spectacular culminates in the presentation of the **Armando Ghitalla Trumpet Competition Awards**, this year totaling \$15,000 in cash prizes, to up to eight musicians. The first prize winner will receive the Armando Ghitalla Award, which includes \$7,500, a solo appearance with the Berkshire Symphony Orchestra on October 27, and the opportunity to perform Johann Nepomuk Hummel’s famous *Trumpet Concerto* with The United States Coast Guard Band during the closing concert of the Spectacular on October 1. **The winner will be announced on stage, after performances by all of the finalists, on the evening of September 29.**

Armando Ghitalla (1925—2001) was one of the most distinguished American trumpet performers of the twentieth century. In addition to his rare talent, he was also a celebrated teacher, and an exceptionally generous human being. He created the Armando Ghitalla Foundation to encourage aspiring trumpet students to pursue the art he loved so deeply. Ghitalla trained at The Juilliard School, performed with the New York City Opera, New York City Ballet, and Houston Symphony, and spent twenty-eight years (fifteen as principal) with the Boston Symphony Orchestra. **In keeping with the mission of the Armando Ghitalla Foundation, one of the goals of the Berkshire Brass Spectacular is complete community and student involvement, with both professional ensembles and Berkshire area schools performing.**

Rolf Smedvig— devoted former student of Armando Ghitalla, Berkshire resident, and Empire Brass trumpeter—has volunteered his time to work with the Armando Ghitalla Foundation in organizing the 2006 Berkshire Brass Spectacular. “Empire Brass is honored to have the opportunity to host the first Brass Spectacular weekend in honor of Armando Ghitalla,” he said. “I am confident this will be an annual event. I hope that the festival can go to national and international levels, to communities everywhere, so that the Armando Ghitalla Foundation can award worthy brass performers worldwide,” he continued. “We hope that Brass Spectacular will become the first music performance competition circuit of its kind, with winners competing year after year, much like professional tennis or golf circuits, but for the best brass players in the world.”

**On Friday, September 29**, the first annual Berkshire Brass Spectacular will begin at 6:30 pm with a concert featuring performances by the **Armando Ghitalla Trumpet Competition Award finalists**, accompanied by members of the **Berkshire Symphony Orchestra** under the baton of director **Ronald Feldman**. **Following the concert, the first prize winner of the Armando Ghitalla Award will be announced live**. At 8:00 pm, the festival will spotlight the musical talent of the Berkshires by presenting seven brass and jazz ensembles from throughout the area, including the **Triton Brass Quintet** (Boston, MA), **Berkshire Music School Brass Ensemble** (Pittsfield, MA), **Williams College Brass** (Williamstown, MA), **Lenox Memorial High School Jazz** (Lenox, MA), **Taconic Hills High School Jazz Ensemble** (Craryville, NY), **Pittsfield High School Jazz Ensemble** (Pittsfield, MA), and **Monument Mountain Regional High School Band and Jazz Ensemble** (Great Barrington, MA).

**On Saturday, September 30**, Rolf Smedvig will emcee a **free concert for families called “Meet the Brass” at 10:00 am**, introducing children to each type of brass instrument (trumpet, horn, trombone, and tuba). **Michelle Perry**, French hornist with Empire Brass, and **Jon Nelson**, trumpeter with Meridian Arts Ensemble and Assistant Professor at the State University of New York at Buffalo, will be featured.

At 8:00 pm that evening, **Empire Brass**, renowned for its brilliant virtuosity and the unparalleled diversity of its repertoire, will present **“Song and Dance”** featuring songs by Gershwin, Copland, Bernstein, and Foster. Guest artists will include **The Berkshire Highlanders with Pipe Major John O’Connor** (Pittsfield, MA); dancers from the **School of the Berkshire Ballet and Cantarella School of Dance** (Lenox & Pittsfield, MA); the **Cantilena Chamber Choir** (Great Barrington, MA); singer **Don Wescott**; violinist **Rick Tiven**; and singer **Robby Baier with award-winning pop/rock band Melodrome** (Housatonic, MA).

**Empire Brass performs over 100 concerts a year in cities such as New York, Boston, Chicago, Washington, London, Zurich, and Tokyo**. They have performed throughout Europe, and have toured Asia more than 25 times. The ensemble has performed on nationally syndicated radio programs including Saint Paul Sunday Morning, Traditions, and NPR Performance Today, and on television shows including Good Morning America and the Today Show.

**On Sunday, October 1, 2006**, the Awards Ceremony for the first annual Armando Ghitalla Trumpet Competition Awards will be held at 11:00 am at the Lenox Club (Lenox, MA; admission by invitation only). That afternoon, the Berkshire Brass Spectacular will come to a close with a **free performance at 2:30 pm**, which will feature **The United States Coast Guard Band** in a full concert, featuring the **winner of the Armando Ghitalla Award** as soloist performing Johann Nepomuk Hummel’s *Trumpet Concerto*.

*All events take place at The Colonial Theatre (111 South Street, Pittsfield, MA) unless otherwise noted. Tickets are \$55, \$42.50, and \$25, and can be purchased at the Colonial Theatre Box Office or at 413.997.4444. Tickets cover all three days of events and are transferable. “Meet the Brass” at 10:00 am on September 30 and the Closing Concert at 2:30 pm on October 1 are FREE, but preference for admission will be given to weekend ticket holders. The Colonial Theatre is accessible to people with disabilities.*

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**About The Colonial Theatre:** The Colonial Theatre opened its doors as one of the Berkshire’s liveliest and most popular cultural institutions on September 28, 1903. Pittsfield was a vibrant, growing center of commerce and industry and an increasingly popular tourist destination for vacationers. From its opening until it became primarily a movie theater in the mid-1930’s, the Colonial was one of the premier playhouses in America. It hosted more great stars of the American theater than any similar theater that still exists. Al Jolson, Lillian Russell, John and Ethel Barrymore, Alfred Lunt and Lynne Fontaine, Helen Hayes, Will Rogers, and Sarah Bernhardt are just a few of the best known stars who appeared on this stage. Of the more than 150 playhouses designed by noted theater architect J.B. McElfatrick, The Colonial is one of a dozen or less still standing. The restoration of the Colonial Theatre has preserved and restored the historically significant architectural and design features for which the Theatre was designated a National Historic Treasure by the National Park Service in 1998, including the entrance, lobby, auditorium front, boxes and balcony, painted detail and ornamental plasterwork, and “sail vault” over the proscenium with its central mural representing *Art and Music*. Today, the Colonial is important both because it represents our strong community heritage and because it symbolizes the enormous spectrum of possibilities for growth and new vitality.

### All Weekend

**FREE** Brass Instrument Display hosted by Conn-Selmer Inc. in The Colonial Theatre lobby

### Friday, September 29, 2006

**6:30 PM: Finalists of the Armando Ghitalla Trumpet Competition** will perform, accompanied by members of the Berkshire Symphony Orchestra under the baton of director Ronald Feldman. **Following the performance, the first prize winner of the Competition announced live.**

### **8:00 PM: Concert featuring SEVEN Berkshire or Boston brass and jazz ensembles:**

Triton Brass Quintet (Boston, MA) | Berkshire Music School Brass Ensemble (Pittsfield, MA)  
Williams College Brass (Williamstown, MA) | Lenox Memorial High School Jazz (Lenox, MA)  
Taconic Hills High School Jazz Ensemble (Craryville, NY) | Pittsfield High School Jazz Ensemble (Pittsfield, MA)  
Monument Mountain Regional High School Band and Jazz Ensemble (Great Barrington, MA)

### Saturday, September 30, 2006

**10:00 AM: FREE FAMILY CONCERT**—“Meet the Brass” emceed by **Rolf Smedvig** and featuring **Michelle Perry**, French hornist with Empire Brass, **Jon Nelson**, trumpeter with Meridian Arts Ensemble and Assistant Professor at the State University of New York at Buffalo

### **8:00 PM: “Song and Dance” performed by the world famous Empire Brass with guest artists:**

The Berkshire Highlanders and Pipe Major John O’Connor (Pittsfield, MA) | Dancers from the School of the Berkshire Ballet and Cantarella School of Dance (Lenox & Pittsfield, MA) | Cantilena Chamber Choir (Great Barrington, MA) | Singer Don Wescott | Violinist Rick Tiven | Singer Robby Baier with pop/rock band Melodrome (Housatonic, MA)

### Sunday, October 1, 2006

**11:00 AM: Awards Ceremony** for the first annual Armando Ghitalla Trumpet Competition Awards at the Lenox Club (Lenox, MA; admission by invitation only)

**2:30 PM: FREE CONCERT**—Full concert by The United States Coast Guard Band featuring the winner of the Armando Ghitalla Award in Johann Nepomuk Hummel’s famous *Trumpet Concerto*