

Graz, Austria, music honored

The Press-Citizen

The University of Iowa Center for New Music will highlight Graz, Austria, one of the newest and most important centers of contemporary European music, in a two-concert mini-festival at 3 and 8 p.m. Saturday in Clapp Recital Hall on the UI campus.

The two programs will present music by composers based at the Hochschule fuer Music und Darstellend Kunst (academy for music and visual arts) in Graz.

In the United States, Vienna and Salzburg are known as Austria's most important music centers. But Graz is fast becoming one of the most **University of Iowa** important centers for

new music in Europe, according to David Gompper, director of the UI Center for New Music.

Gompper explained that this is in some ways an unlikely development for Graz, a largely industrial city of about 250,000. Graz is mostly known for science and engineering; the astronomers Johannes Kepler and Nicolaus Copernicus both lived in Graz, and motors for BMW and other car manufacturers are designed there.

"And yet," Gompper says, "Graz has one of the most important schools of composition in Europe, along with Paris and Berlin. They have had an avant-garde music program at the Hochschule since the 1980s, and today they are the most liberal of the music schools in Austria."

The study of music is structurally different in Europe and America. In Europe, the music theory or history would be completed at the university, whereas learning an instrument (as well as composition) would be accomplished at the Hochschule. At the turn of the century, many American institutions combined the two areas — academic and applied. UI supports both the academic study of theory, musicology and composition as well as studio instruction in all instrumental and vocal areas, according to Gompper in the September 1999 issue of the *Austrian Cultural Institute's Newsletter*.