

MUSICAL MOMENT

Most Famous Bass

BASS LEVEL: Doctoral student Spencer Phillips (right) and James VanDemark, a professor of double bass, and their fellow bassists at the Eastman School of Music practiced on a unique piece of history this winter when a 200-year-old bass that once belonged to virtuoso Serge Koussevitzky, the famed music director of the Boston Symphony, was in residence at Eastman. The International Society of Bassists loaned “the most famous bass in the world” to VanDemark and his students for a month, the first time that the bass has had a temporary home at a music school. While performing as the principal bass of the Hamilton, Ontario, Philharmonic in the 1970s, VanDemark took lessons on the bass when he studied with bassist Gary Karr, who was given the instrument by Koussevitzky’s widow.

PHOTOGRAPH BY ADAM FENSTER



