



Jason Vieaux and Julien Labro Perform Piazzolla and Give World Premiere of Labro's *Canvas* for Guitar and Bandoneón with New West Symphony led by Michael Christie



Saturday, November 16, 2019 at 7:30pm | Thousand Oaks Civic Arts Plaza | Thousand Oaks, CA
Sunday, November 17, 2019 at 3pm | Rancho Campana Performing Arts Center | Camarillo, CA
Tickets and more information available at www.newwestsymphony.org

Watch Jason Vieaux and Julien Labro Perform Pat Metheny's *Antonia*: <http://bit.ly/VieauxLabroWQXR>

“The dynamic duo performed from one musical mind...perfectly in sync...a lot of fun” – *Cleveland Classical*

www.jasonvieaux.com | www.julienlabro.com | www.michaelchristieonline.com

Thousand Oaks and Camarillo, CA — On **Saturday, November 16** and **Sunday, November 17, 2019**, Grammy-winning guitarist **Jason Vieaux** and internationally acclaimed composer, bandoneónist, and accordionist **Julien Labro** join forces to perform with **New West Symphony**, led by Music Director **Michael Christie**. As longtime collaborators, Vieaux and Labro have cultivated their creative musical partnership on stage and in the studio, breaking new musical ground with their 2016 album *Infusion* (Azica) and performing across the country. *San Francisco Classical Voice* reports, “Vieaux and Labro cannot disguise the joy they get out of playing together, a joy that makes their instrumental mastery that much more enjoyable to hear.”

Vieaux and Labro will give the world premiere of *Canvas*, Labro's concerto for bandoneón and guitar with string orchestra. Labro was commissioned by New West Symphony to write this new work in order to expand the limited repertoire for the duo's unique combination, rather than adapting a double concerto from a more conventional repertoire – that of Bach, for instance. On this concert, *Canvas* will be paired with Labro's arrangement of **Piazzolla's *The Four Seasons of Buenos Aires***, a work that Vieaux and Labro have performed extensively and recorded with the chamber orchestra A Far Cry.

Additional works on New West Symphony's November 16 and 17 program, entitled “Trip the Light Fantastic,” include **Bartók's *Romanian Folk Dances***; **Gabriela Lena Frank's *Leyendas: An Andean Walkabout***; and **Copland's “Hoedown” from *Rodeo*** – a fabulous rhythmic journey from Transylvania, through Argentina, to the American West.

“This fun and diverse program uniquely demonstrates New West Symphony's desire to broaden our concert experience and engage our audiences aurally and visually,” explains Michael Christie. “In addition to featuring Julien and Jason, New West welcomes artists from LA-based **INCA, the Peruvian Ensemble** to provide additional context for Gabriela Lena Frank's Peruvian inspired *Leyendas*. If that wasn't enough, students from many area schools will join me and the New West Symphony onstage for Copland's ‘Hoedown.’ Not only do I want our patrons to enjoy witnessing the creative process, I want them to participate in it as well!”

Julien Labro says of his new work, *Canvas*, “As a musician and composer, I am inspired by the infinite possibility of sound and music, especially in an orchestral setting where each instrument is constantly contributing to the infinite number of possibilities. In addition to the instruments, the musicians create a second layer by bringing his/her interpretations and emotions to the written notes. What results is a beautiful intersection of sounds, textures, and emotions that transcend the written music. *Canvas* pays homage to this idea of sounds weaving together. Like the threads that come together to form a piece of canvas textile, the instruments and musicians interweave into a larger fabric of music that only exists when every instrument comes together.”

Vieaux will present a solo work, *Devil’s Strum*, written for him by **Dan Visconti** in 2010. *Devil’s Strum* is the selected work for this concert cycle’s **Entr’acte** – New West Symphony’s “a la carte” intermission initiative featuring a performance of a contemporary work to further enhance the orchestra’s patron experience.

Devil’s Strum is inspired by a commonly told myth surrounding American blues guitar playing, in which a man meets the Devil and strikes a bargain: in exchange for inhuman ability and charisma as a guitarist, the man signs over his eternal soul. Visconti explains, “In several versions of the myth, the central moment is when the Devil tunes up the doomed man’s guitar—the moment when the strings become awakened with unseen power and the man’s fate is sealed. This piece begins at just this moment—the moment of the Devil’s long fingers strumming the jangly strings— and proceeds as the instrument is literally tuned up, until ever faster and more virtuosic riffs drive the piece to its conclusion.”

Performances take place Saturday, November 16, 2019 at 7:30pm at Thousand Oaks Civic Arts Plaza (2100 Thousand Oaks Blvd | Thousand Oaks, CA) and Sunday, November 17, 2019 at 3pm at Rancho Campana Performing Arts Center (4235 Mar Vista Drive | Camarillo, CA). More information at www.newwestsymphony.org.

Grammy winner **Jason Vieaux**, “among the elite of today’s classical guitarists” (*Gramophone*), is the guitarist that goes beyond the classical. His most recent solo album, *Play*, won the 2015 Grammy Award for Best Classical Instrumental Solo.

Jason Vieaux has performed as soloist with over 100 orchestras in the U.S. and abroad. Additional recent and future highlights include performances at Caramoor Festival as Artist-in-Residence, Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, Philadelphia Chamber Music Society, the National Gallery of Art, San Francisco’s Herbst Theatre, Buenos Aires’ Teatro Colon, Amsterdam’s Concertgebouw, New York’s 92Y, Ravinia Festival, Domaine Forget International Festival, Carmel Bach Festival, and many other distinguished series. A first-rate chamber musician and programmer, he frequently collaborates with artists such as the Escher Quartet, harpist Yolanda Kondonassis, accordion/bandoneon virtuoso Julien Labro, and violinist Anne Akiko Meyers. His passion for new music has fostered premieres by Jonathan Leshnoff, Avner Dorman, Jeff Beal, Dan Visconti, David Ludwig, Vivian Fung, José Luis Merlin, Mark Mancina, and more.

Vieaux’s latest CD release, *Dance* (Azica) with the Escher Quartet, includes works by Boccherini, Castelnuovo-Tedesco, and Aaron Jay Kernis. Later this season, he will release a new solo Bach album on Azica. Additional recordings include Jonathan Leshnoff’s Guitar Concerto with the Nashville Symphony Orchestra (Naxos); Jeff Beal’s “Six Sixteen” Guitar Concerto with the Norrköping Symphony Orchestra (BIS); *Infusion* (Azica) with accordionist/bandoneonist Julien Labro; Ginastera’s Guitar Sonata, which is featured on *Ginastera: One Hundred* (Oberlin Music) produced by harpist Yolanda Kondonassis; and *Together* (Azica), a duo album with Kondonassis.

In 2012, the Jason Vieaux School of Classical Guitar was launched with ArtistWorks Inc., an interface that provides one-on-one online study with Vieaux for guitar students around the world. In 2011, he co-founded the guitar department at the Curtis Institute of Music, and in 2015 was invited to inaugurate the guitar program at the Eastern Music Festival. Vieaux has taught at the Cleveland Institute of Music since 1997, heading the guitar department since 2001. He has received a Naumburg Foundation top prize, a Cleveland Institute of Music Distinguished Alumni Award, GFA International Guitar Competition First Prize, and a Salon di Virtuosi Career Grant. His primary teachers were Jeremy Sparks and John Holmquist. Vieaux was the first classical musician to be featured on NPR’s “Tiny Desk” series. Jason Vieaux plays a 2013 Gernot Wagner guitar with Augustine strings. For more information, visit www.jasonvieaux.com.

Heralded as “the next accordion star” by Howard Reich of the *Chicago Tribune*, **Julien Labro** has established himself as one of the foremost accordion and bandoneón players in both the classical and jazz genres. Deemed to be “a triple threat: brilliant technician, poetic melodist and cunning arranger,” his artistry, virtuosity, and creativity as a musician, composer and arranger have earned him international acclaim and continue to astonish audiences worldwide.

French-born Labro was influenced early on by traditional folk music and the melodic, lyrical quality of the French chanson. Upon discovering the music of jazz legends, he quickly became inspired by the originality, freedom, creativity, and the endless possibilities in their musical language. After graduating from the Marseille Conservatory of Music, Labro began winning international awards including the Coupe Mondiale, the Castelfidardo Competitions, and many others. In 1998, Labro moved to

the United States, where he further pursued his musical dream. Equipped with advanced degrees in classical music, jazz studies, and composition, Labro draws from his diverse academic background and eclectic musical influences as he searches for new themes and untried concepts, transforming and developing his creative ideas into new projects.

Labro has collaborated with numerous symphony orchestras and chamber ensembles, often playing the dual roles of solo artist as well as composer/arranger. These include the conductorless Boston-based chamber orchestra, A Far Cry, Spektral Quartet, Arneis Quartet, Ensemble Vivant of Toronto, and Curtis On Tour from the Curtis Institute of Music faculty of Philadelphia. He has been a guest soloist with numerous symphonies such as the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, Orchestra of St Luke's, New World Symphony, the Hartford Symphony, the Arkansas Symphony, the Grand Rapids Symphony, the Cape Cod Symphony, the Cleveland Pops Orchestra, the Lebanese Philharmonic Orchestra, the Qatar Philharmonic Orchestra and many more.

Labro's musical journey has taken him all across North America, Europe, the Middle East and South America. Labro has performed, and collaborated with diverse artists such as Brazilian legend João Donato, big-band leader Maria Schneider, vocalist Cassandra Wilson, Lebanese oud master Marcel Khalife, pianists Uri Caine and Fernando Otero, classical Grammy-winner guitarist Jason Vieaux, saxophonists Paquito D'Rivera, Miguel Zenón, James Carter, Chris Cheek, Jon Irabagon and Victor Goines, clarinetist Anat Cohen, trumpeter Dominick Farinacci, composers Bryce Dessner, Du Yun and Avner Dorman, harmonica extraordinaire Howard Levy, percussionist Jamey Haddad, and guitarists Howard Alden, Larry Coryell, Frank Vignola, Tommy Emmanuel, and John and Bucky Pizzarelli. For more information, visit www.julienlabro.com.

Grammy award-winning conductor **Michael Christie**, Music Director of the New West Symphony, is a thoughtfully innovative conductor, equally at home in the symphonic and opera worlds, who is focused on making the audience experience at his performances entertaining, enlightening, and enriching.

Christie won a 2019 Grammy Award (Best Opera Recording) for the world premiere recording of Mason Bates' *The (R)evolution of Steve Jobs* with The Santa Fe Opera (PENTATONE), and was featured in *Opera News* in August 2012 as one of 25 people believed to "break out and become major forces in the field in the coming decade." At Minnesota Opera, Christie led 24 productions over eight years, six seasons as its first-ever Music Director (2012-2018).

2019-2020 is Christie's first full season as Music Director of the New West Symphony, and he will lead *operas with Indiana University Opera and Ballet Theater, San Francisco Opera, and Lyric Opera of Kansas City*. Recent world premiere performances include *An American Soldier* by Huang Ruo with Opera Theatre of St. Louis in 2018 and *The (R)evolution of Steve Jobs* by Mason Bates with Santa Fe Opera in 2017.

Christie's conducting career, spanning more than 20 years, has included serving as Music Director of the Phoenix Symphony and Brooklyn Philharmonic and as Chief Conductor of the Queensland Orchestra in Australia, as well as guest appearances leading top orchestras around the world. Christie also served as Music Director of the Colorado Music Festival from 2000-2013.

Michael Christie first came to international attention in 1995 when he was awarded a special prize for "Outstanding Potential" at the First International Sibelius Conductors' Competition in Helsinki. Following the competition, he was invited to become an apprentice conductor with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra where he subsequently worked with Daniel Barenboim as well as at the Berlin State Opera. Christie holds a bachelors degree in trumpet from the Oberlin College Conservatory of Music. He lives in the Twin Cities with his wife, Alexis, a physician, and their two children. For more information, visit www.michaelchristieonline.com.

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