



Grammy-winning Conductor Michael Christie Announces First Season as Music Director of New West Symphony in 2019-2020



Photo by Kenny Backer available in high resolution at www.jensenartists.com.

25th Anniversary Season Highlights:

Virtuoso soloists – Olga Kern, Sarah Chang, Jason Vieaux & Julien Labro, Eroica Trio, and jazz legend Marcus Roberts

***Entr'acte* – expanded programming with performances featuring contemporary classical music**

World Premiere by Julien Labro for guitar and bandoneón – a New West Symphony commission

The *Violins of Hope* – restored Holocaust-era string instruments to be performed on Jonathan Leshnoff's Symphony No. 4 "Heichalos"

***Intermission Insights* – on-stage interviews with Michael Christie**

www.michaelchristieonline.com | www.newwestsymphony.org

"Conductor Michael Christie melds fire and ice." – *Star Tribune*

Thousand Oaks, CA — Grammy-winning conductor **Michael Christie** and the **New West Symphony** announce Christie's inaugural season as Music Director, coinciding with the orchestra's 25th anniversary in 2019-2020. New West Symphony presents six programs, October through May, on **Saturdays at 7:30pm** at Thousand Oaks Civic Arts Plaza (2100 Thousand Oaks Blvd) and **Sundays at 3pm** at the Oxnard Performing Arts Center (800 Hobson Way).

"My first season as Music Director is as much about connecting as it is about celebrating," says Christie. "Patrons will immediately notice two new options to enhance their concert-going experience: ***Intermission Insights***, an on-stage interview between guest artists and me; and ***Entr'acte***, a performance of contemporary compositions to showcase a diverse array of living composers, many of whom have strong ties to Los Angeles. Both features offer an opportunity to connect more personally with performers and expand everyone's experience with emerging compositional talent."

Christie continues, "Overall season programming speaks to our desire to present an engaging and varied selection of works we hope will appeal to patrons with an emphasis on our terrific ensemble of Los Angeles-based orchestral artists performing alongside world-renowned guest soloists. I'm very excited to start my tenure with the New West Symphony family and hope that my desire to connect with patrons and the broader community will be reflected strongly over this and coming years."

Guest soloists throughout the season include violinist **Sarah Chang**, performing Brahms' majestic Violin Concerto; pianist **Olga Kern**, presenting Rachmaninoff's Piano Concerto No. 3; the **Eroica Trio**, saluting Beethoven's 250th birthday with his Triple Concerto; Grammy-winning guitarist **Jason Vieaux** and bandoneón virtuoso **Julien Labro**,

premiering New West Symphony commission for guitar and bandoneon by Labro; and the **Marcus Roberts Trio**, featuring some of America's most notable jazz musicians.

Complete 2019-2020 Programming

Season subscriptions available at www.newwestsymphony.org.

25th Season Salute

Saturday, October 5, 2019 | 7:30 PM | Thousand Oaks Civic Arts Plaza

Sunday, October 6, 2019 | 3:00 PM | Oxnard Performing Arts Center

Michael Christie, conductor

Marcus Roberts Trio, guest artists

Corigliano | *Salute*

Gershwin | Concerto in F

Rimsky-Korsakov | *Scheherazade*

Trip The Light Fantastic

Saturday, November 16, 2019 | 7:30 PM | Thousand Oaks Civic Arts Plaza

Sunday, November 17, 2019 | 3:00 PM | Oxnard Performing Arts Center

Michael Christie, conductor

Jason Vieaux, guitar

Julien Labro, bandoneón

Dancers

Bartók | *Romanian Folk Dances*

Frank | *Leyendas: An Andean Walkabout*

Labro | New West Symphony world premiere commission for guitar and bandoneón

Piazzolla | *The Four Seasons of Buenos Aires*

Copland | *Hoedown*

Happy 250th, Ludwig!

Saturday, January 25, 2020 | 7:30 PM | Thousand Oaks Civic Arts Plaza

Sunday, January 26, 2020 | 3:00 PM | Oxnard Performing Arts Center

Steffan Sanderling, guest conductor

Eroica Trio

Beethoven | Triple Concerto for Violin, Cello, Piano, and Orchestra

Beethoven | Symphony No. 3

Dreams

Saturday, February 29, 2020 | 7:30 PM | Thousand Oaks Civic Arts Plaza

Sunday, March 1, 2020 | 3:00 PM | Oxnard Performing Arts Center

Michael Christie, conductor

Vocal Soloists

Women's and Children's Choirs

Mendelssohn | *A Midsummer Night's Dream*

Krása | *Brundibár*

Violins of Hope

Select New West Symphony musicians will perform on the *Violins of Hope*, a collection of string instruments lovingly restored and with their own stories from the Holocaust. "Heichalos" was composed expressly for *Violins of Hope*.

Saturday, April 18, 2020 | 7:30 PM | Thousand Oaks Civic Arts Plaza

Sunday, April 19, 2020 | 3:00 PM | Oxnard Performing Arts Center

Michael Christie, conductor

Olga Kern, piano

Newman | *Diary of Anne Frank Suite*

Leshnoff | Symphony No. 4, "Heichalos"

Rachmaninoff | Piano Concerto No. 3

Sarah Chang | Brahms Violin Concerto

Saturday, May 2, 2020 | 7:30 PM | Thousand Oaks Civic Arts Plaza

Sunday, May 3, 2020 | 3:00 PM | Oxnard Performing Arts Center

Michael Christie, conductor

Sarah Chang, violin

Sibelius | Symphony No. 3

Brahms | Violin Concerto

Michael Christie 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. *The New York Times* reports, "Michael Christie is a director open to adventure and challenge," and the *Cincinnati Enquirer* declares, "If Michael Christie represents the future of music in this country, the future looks promising indeed."

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). In 2017, Christie led the world premiere performances at The Santa Fe Opera, "with suave assurance" (*San Francisco Chronicle*), with "precision and pizzazz" (*Santa Fe New Mexican*), and "preside[d] over an expertly executed performance" (*The Financial Times*).

Christie 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). Highlights for Christie's 2018-2019 season include engagements with Indiana University Opera and Ballet Theater, Opéra de Montréal, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Sacramento Philharmonic and Opera, and Michigan Opera Theatre. 2019-2020 will be Christie's first full season as Music Director of the New West Symphony, and he will lead operas with San Francisco Opera and Lyric Opera of Kansas City.

Deeply committed to bringing new works to life, Michael Christie has championed commissions by leading and emerging composers alike, including Mark Adamo, Mason Bates, Michael Daugherty, Osvaldo Golijov, Mark Grey,

Daron Hagen, Huang Ruo, Matthew Hindson, Marjan Mozetich, Stephen Paulus, Kevin Puts, and more. In 2018, he led the world premiere of *An American Soldier*, a two-act opera by Huang Ruo, with Opera Theatre of St. Louis. *The New York Times* reported, “Both the subtle colorings and pummeling intensity came through in the compelling performance the conductor Michael Christie drew from the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra.”

Christie’s conducting career, spanning more than 20 years, has included serving as Music Director of the Phoenix Symphony (2005-2013) and Brooklyn Philharmonic (2005-2010), and as Chief Conductor of the Queensland Orchestra (2001-2004) in Australia, as well as guest appearances leading the Los Angeles Philharmonic, National Symphony Orchestra, Civic Orchestra of Chicago, Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra, Rhode Island Philharmonic, and the Symphonies of Dallas, St. Louis, Atlanta, Houston, Minnesota, Oregon, Indianapolis, Cincinnati, and Santa Rosa. Christie’s many European engagements have included leading the Rotterdam Philharmonic, DSO Berlin, Orchestre National de Lille, Swedish and Netherlands Radio Symphony, City of Birmingham Symphony, NDR Hannover Orchestra and the Czech Philharmonic. In addition, Christie enjoys a strong profile in Australia, where he has conducted the Sydney Symphony, Tasmanian Symphony, Opera Queensland, and the Western Australian Symphony in Perth.

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 during the 1996-1997 season. Christie graduated from the Oberlin College Conservatory of Music with a bachelor's degree in trumpet performance.

Christie lives in the Twin Cities with his wife, Alexis, a physician, and their two children.

For more information, visit www.michaelchristieonline.com.

Founded in 1995, the **New West Symphony** is a professional orchestra that draws its players from the rich talent pool of professional Los Angeles-area musicians. The Symphony is the resident company of the Oxnard Performing Arts Center and the Thousand Oaks Civic Arts Plaza. It presents six Masterpiece Series concerts annually, performing major works from the symphonic repertoire with internationally-acclaimed artists as guest soloists. The Symphony also provides quality outreach and educational opportunities for the communities it serves through its annual Symphonic Adventures concert programs for youth, its traveling Music Van, and the Laby Harmony Project, a year-round music and leadership program for underserved students.

###