



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

Announcing Grammy-winning Conductor Michael Christie's 2019-2020 Season

First Season as Music Director of New West Symphony

Debut with Lyric Opera of Kansas City

**Returns as Guest Conductor with San Francisco Opera;
Sacramento Philharmonic & Opera; Indiana University
Opera and Ballet Theater**

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

www.michaelchristieonline.com

New York, NY — Grammy-winning conductor **Michael Christie** announces his 2019-2020 season, featuring his inaugural season as Music Director of the **New West Symphony**. 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 leads **Lyric Opera of Kansas City**'s production of Mozart's *The Abduction from the Seraglio* in his debut with the company. Christie returns to the **San Francisco Opera** to lead Mason Bates' *The (R)evolution of Steve Jobs*, for which he won a 2019 Grammy Award (Best Opera Recording) for the world premiere recording with The Santa Fe Opera (PENTATONE). In 2017, he 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 makes additional returns with **Sacramento Philharmonic & Opera** (Mozart's Symphony No. 41, “Jupiter” plus operatic finales from Mozart's *Così fan tutte* and *The Marriage of Figaro*) and **Indiana University Opera and Ballet Theater** (Puccini's *Suor Angelica* and *Gianni Schicchi*).

Coinciding with the New West Symphony's 25th anniversary, Christie says of his first year with orchestra, “The overall season programming speaks to our desire to feature an array of diverse world-class artistry among our guest artists as well as our New West Symphony musicians promising to delight those seeking the standard repertory along with those interested in new concert experiences.”

Patrons will immediately notice two new options to enhance the concert-going experience: ***Intermission Insights***, an on-stage interview between guest artists and maestro Christie; and ***ENTR'ACTE***, a performance of a contemporary work to showcase a diverse array of composers, including **Kevin Puts, Dan Visconti, Pavel Haas, Jennifer Higdon, Grażyna Bacewicz, and Sarah Kirkland Snider**.

An exciting line-up of virtuoso soloists is scheduled throughout the season – pianist **Olga Kern**; violinist **Sarah Chang**; guitarist **Jason Vieaux** & bandoneónist/composer **Julien Labro** performing a New West Symphony commission by Labro; **Eroica Trio** and the legendary **Marcus Roberts Trio**. Restored Holocaust-era string instruments – will be performed during **Jonathan Leshnoff**'s Symphony No. 4 “Heichalos,” which was composed specifically for these historic instruments as part of **Violins of Hope in Los Angeles County**.

Christie adds, “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.”

Michael Christie’s 2019-2020 New West Symphony Appearances

Season subscriptions and single tickets available at www.newwestsymphony.org

All Saturday Performances: **Thousand Oaks Civic Arts Plaza** (2100 E Thousand Oaks Blvd. | Thousand Oaks, CA)

All Sunday Performances: **Rancho Campana Performing Arts Center** (4235 Mar Vista Dr. | Camarillo, CA)

25th Season Salute

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

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

Jazz trio improvisation in the classical form featuring **Marcus Roberts Trio**, plus musical tales of adventure

John Corigliano | *Salute*

Gershwin | Concerto in F – **Marcus Roberts Trio**

Rimsky-Korsakov | *Scheherazade*

ENTR’ACTE: Kevin Puts | *...this noble company*

Trip the Light Fantastic

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

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

A fabulous rhythmic journey from Transylvania, through Argentina, to the American West featuring soloists guitarist **Jason Vieaux** and bandoneónist and composer **Julien Labro**.

Bartók | *Romanian Folk Dances*

Gabriela Lena Frank | *Leyendas: An Andean Walkabout*

Julien Labro | *Canvas* - New West Symphony commission – **Jason Vieaux, guitar & Julien Labro, bandoneón**

Piazzolla | *The Four Seasons of Buenos Aires* – **Jason Vieaux, guitar & Julien Labro, bandoneón**

Copland | *Hoedown*

ENTR’ACTE: Dan Visconti | *Devil’s Strum* – **Jason Vieaux, guitar**

Dreams

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

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

A hopeful children’s opera from a dark time in history and enduring music written for a Shakespeare comedy featuring **Los Robles Children’s Choir** and vocal soloists (to be announced).

Mendelssohn | *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*

Krása | *Brundibár*

ENTR'ACTE: Pavel Haas | *Study for strings*

Violins of Hope

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

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

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. **Jonathan Leshnoff's** Symphony No. 4 "Heichalos" was composed expressly for these instruments. Pianist **Olga Kern** honors Rachmaninoff.

Alfred Newman | *Diary of Anne Frank* Suite

Jonathan Leshnoff | Symphony No. 4, "Heichalos"

Rachmaninoff | Piano Concerto No. 3 – **Olga Kern, piano**

ENTR'ACTE: Grażyna Bacewicz | Concerto for String Orchestra (Allegro)

Sarah Chang | Brahms Violin Concerto

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

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

Violinist **Sarah Chang** returns to New West Symphony for Brahms' Violin Concerto, bursting with melodies.

Sibelius | Symphony No. 3

Brahms | Violin Concerto – **Sarah Chang, violin**

ENTR'ACTE: Sarah Kirkland Snider | *Daughter of the Waves*

Michael Christie's 2019-2020 Guest Appearances

Lyric Opera of Kansas City

All performances take place at The Kauffman Center | 1601 Broadway Blvd | Kansas City, MO

Saturday, September 21, 2019 | 7:30 PM

Wednesday, September 25, 2019 | 7:30 PM

Friday, September 27, 2019 | 7:30 PM

Sunday, September 29, 2019 | 2:00 PM

Mozart | *The Abduction from the Seraglio*

Sacramento Philharmonic and Opera

All performances take place at Fremont Presbyterian Church | 5770 Carlson Drive | Sacramento, CA

Friday, November 8, 2019 | 8:00 PM

Saturday, November 9, 2019 | 8:00 PM

Mozart | Operatic Finales from *Così fan tutte* and *The Marriage of Figaro*

Mozart | Symphony No. 41, "Jupiter"

Indiana University Opera and Ballet Theater

All performances take place at Musical Arts Center | 101 North Jordan Avenue | Bloomington, IN

Friday, February 7, 2020 | 7:30 PM

Saturday, February 8, 2020 | 7:30 PM

Friday, February 14, 2020 | 7:30 PM

Saturday, February 15, 2020 | 7:30 PM

Puccini | *Suor Angelica* and *Gianni Schicchi*

San Francisco Opera

All performances take place at The War Memorial Opera House | 301 Van Ness Avenue | San Francisco, CA

Saturday, June 20, 2020 | 7:30 PM

Wednesday, June 24, 2020 | 7:30 PM

Thursday, June 25, 2020 | 7:30 PM

Sunday, June 28, 2020 | 2:00 PM

Tuesday, June 30, 2020 | 7:30 PM

Wednesday, July 1, 2020 | 7:30 PM

Friday, July 3, 2020 | 7:30 PM

Mason Bates | *The (R)evolution of Steve Jobs*

About Michael Christie

Grammy-winning conductor Michael 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) – from staples of the repertory such as *La Traviata*, *Nabucco*, *Macbeth*, *La Bohème*, *Fanciulla del West*, *Arabella*, and *Das Rheingold* to performances of 20th and 21st century operas via Minnesota Opera’s New Works Initiative, including Bernard Herrmann’s only opera *Wuthering Heights*, the world premiere of Kevin Puts’ *Silent Night* which won the Pulitzer Prize in 2012, the world premiere of Kevin Puts’ *The Manchurian Candidate*, and the world premiere of Paul Moravec’s *The Shining*.

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 “with impressive precision,” as praised by *Dallas Morning News*. *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.”

Other recent highlights include Christie’s San Francisco Opera debut in the world premiere performances of Mark Adamo’s *The Gospel of Mary Magdalene* and the world premiere of *Twenty-Seven*, a new opera by Ricky Ian Gordon commissioned by Opera Theatre of St. Louis. Notable past performances include highly praised productions of Corigliano’s *The Ghosts of Versailles* and John Adams’s *The Death of Klinghoffer*, and the North American premiere of Unsuk Chin’s *Alice in Wonderland*, all with Opera Theatre of St. Louis; the European premieres of *The Ghosts of Versailles* at the Wexford Festival Opera; as well as various performances at Opernhaus Zürich, Finnish National Opera, Scottish Opera, and Lyric Opera of Chicago. In addition to premiering Kevin Puts’ *Silent Night* with Minnesota Opera, he also led performances by Opera Company of Philadelphia, Wexford Festival Opera in Ireland, and Opéra de Montréal.

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.

Christie's New York Philharmonic debut came in 2007 when he stepped in on short notice for an ailing Riccardo Muti, and his Carnegie Hall debut came in 2014 when he led the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra as part of the Spring for Music festival. Christie also served as the Music Director of the Colorado Music Festival from 2000-2013, where he was highly praised for his innovative programming and where audiences are now at an all-time high, resulting in him being named "Musician of the Year" by *The Denver Post* in 2010.

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.

###