

Mark O'Connor, violin
Performing with the Honor Orchestra of America

"One of the most spectacular journeys in recent American music." —New York Times

A product of America's rich aural folk tradition as well as classical music, Mark O'Connor's creative journey began at the feet of a pair of musical giants. The first was the folk fiddler and innovator who created the modern era of American fiddling, Benny Thomasson; the second, French jazz violinist, considered one of the greatest improvisers in the history of the violin, Stephane Grappelli. Along the way, between these marvelous musical extremes, Mark O'Connor absorbed knowledge and influence from the multitude of musical styles and genres he studied. Now, at age 49, he has melded and shaped these influences into a new American Classical music, and a vision of an entirely American school of string playing. As The Los Angeles Times recently noted, he has "crossed over so many boundaries, that his style is purely personal.

Mr. O'Connor regularly conducts three-day residencies, giving lectures, demonstrations, and workshops at a variety of music programs around the country. Some of his recent hosts include The Juilliard School, Harvard University, Berklee College of Music, Cleveland Institute of Music, Rice University, University of Maryland, University of Texas, Curtis Institute, Eastman School of Music, Tanglewood and Aspen Summer Festival. Mr. O'Connor was Artist-in-Residence at UCLA for the 2008-2009 season. He currently serves as Artist-in-Residence at the University of Miami. Mr. O'Connor is the founder and president of the internationally recognized Mark O'Connor String Camp, held each summer at ETSU in Johnson City, Tennessee and at Berklee College of Music in Boston, Massachusetts.

The O'Connor Violin Method has been widely praised since its debut in fall 2009 as "an American grown rival to the Suzuki method" (The New Yorker). It takes an American Classical approach to modern violin playing, offering a technical foundation using songs from the diverse range of traditional American string playing. The groundbreaking method is the first violin method to feature all American music and has been hailed by teachers from across the country as filling a significant gap in classical music education. It was inspired by the thousands of students Mr. O'Connor has taught at his string camps and at universities and conservatories across the country, and by his belief that the modern classical violin student who develops a working knowledge of folk fiddling, jazz music and world music styles can enjoy a lifetime of music-making, and be more successful in the new music environment.

For more information about Mr. O'Connor's educational work, tour dates and String Camp, please visit, www.markoconnor.com

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