

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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# **HARRIS THEATER FOR MUSIC AND DANCE BRINGS TOGETHER PREEMINENT GUITARIST SHARON ISBIN AND VIOLIN VIRTUOSO MARK O'CONNOR FOR A CELEBRATION OF STRINGS & WORLD PREMIERE OF *APPALACHIA WALTZ FOR GUITAR AND VIOLIN*, MARCH 6, 2010**

*Isbin and O'Connor to perform selections from Isbin's  
2010 Grammy Award-winning Album, Journey to the New World*

CHICAGO (February 3, 2010) – As part of its *Harris Theater Presents* 2009-2010 season of world-renowned national and international artists and ensembles, the **Harris Theater for Music and Dance** will present two-time Grammy Award-winning classical guitarist **Sharon Isbin** and virtuoso violinist **Mark O'Connor** Saturday, March 6, 2010 at 7:30 p.m. This special engagement marks the **Chicago Premiere** of the renowned musicians performing together as duo recitalists, and will feature the **World Premiere** of Mr. O'Connor's *Appalachia Waltz for Guitar and Violin*.

Acclaimed for her lyricism, technique and versatility, **Sharon Isbin** is considered "the preeminent guitarist of our time." Her catalogue of more than 25 recordings – spanning Baroque, Spanish/Latin to jazz-fusion – reflects her versatility and ability to expand the guitar repertoire with some of the finest new works of the century. In 2009 Ms. Isbin released her newest CD, *Journey to the New World*, a voyage in song from the British Isles to the New World; the album received the 2010 Grammy Award for *Best Instrumental Soloist Performance (without orchestra)* and marks the first time in 43 years that a guitarist has won a second classical Grammy. The #1 Bestselling Classical CD at Amazon.com, iTunes, and BarnesandNoble.com, *Journey to the New World* features John Duarte's *Joan Baez Suite* and Mark O'Connor's *Strings & Threads Suite* for violin and guitar, both of which will be performed at the Harris Theater engagement.

Winner of the Madrid, Toronto, and Munich Competitions, and *Guitar Player's* "Best Classical Guitarist" award, Ms. Isbin gives sold-out performances throughout the world in the greatest halls including New York's Carnegie and Avery Fisher Halls, Boston's Symphony Hall, Washington D.C.'s Kennedy Center, and throughout Europe. Ms. Isbin has appeared as soloist with over 160 orchestras, including the New York Philharmonic, National Symphony, Baltimore, Detroit, Houston and Dallas Symphonies. She has also appeared with the Zurich and Lausanne Chamber Orchestras, the London Symphony, Orchestre National de France, and the Jerusalem and Tokyo Symphonies; and has performed at countless festivals including Mostly Mozart, Aspen, Ravinia, Grant Park, Paris and Budapest International Festivals. In November 2009, she performed a concert at the White House by invitation of the President and First Lady.

A product of America's rich aural folk tradition, as well as classical and flamenco music, **Mark O'Connor** is considered "one of the most talented and imaginative artists working in music today," Influenced by folk fiddler and innovator Benny Thomasson, who created the modern era of American fiddling in the 1940's, and French jazz violinist Stephane Grappelli, considered one of the greatest improvisers in the history of the violin, Mr. O'Connor has melded and shaped these influences, along with a host of other musical styles and genres, into a new American Classical music and a vision of an entirely American school of string playing. As *The Los Angeles Times* noted, he has "crossed over so many boundaries, that his style is purely personal."

Among his recordings is the acclaimed *Appalachia Waltz* (1996), a collaboration with cellist Yo-Yo Ma and bassist Edgar Meyer and the follow-up release, *Appalachian Journey*, which received a Grammy Award in February 2001. The World Premiere performance of *Appalachia Waltz for Guitar and Violin* at the Harris is an adaptation of the original *Appalachia Waltz* and was arranged by Mr. O'Connor specifically for performance with Ms. Isbin. With more than 200 performances, his first full length orchestral score "Fiddle Concerto" (1995) has become the most-performed modern violin concerto, and in March 2009 he released the recording of his most ambitious work yet, the six-movement "Americana Symphony" (performed by the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra under conductor Marin Alsop). Lastly, in 2009 Mr. O'Connor released a new method book "The O'Connor Violin Method," which evolved from the New York string camps he hosts for violin students every summer. The guide represents music from all of the Americas (Mexico, Canada and the United States) and features musical styles including classical, folk, Latin, French-Canadian jigs, jazz and ragtime.

The program for the Sharon Isbin and Mark O'Connor at the Harris Theater is as follows:

Asturias (transcribed by Andrés Segovia)	Isaac Albeniz (1860-1909)
Recuerdos de la Alhambra	Francisco Tárrega (1852-1909)
Andecy	Andrew York (b.1958)
Waltz Opus 8, #4	Agustin Barrios Mangoré (1885-1944)

*Sharon Isbin, guitar*

Selections to be announced from the stage  
*Mark O'Connor, violin*

Joan Baez Suite, Opus 144 (2002) (written for Sharon Isbin -- Commissioned by the Augustine Foundation)	John Duarte (b. 1919)
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*Sharon Isbin, guitar*

Selections to be announced from the stage  
*Mark O'Connor, violin*

Strings & Threads Suite Violin & Guitar adaptation written for Sharon Isbin 2006	Mark O'Connor (b. 1961)
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*Mark O'Connor, violin/Sharon Isbin, guitar*

Appalachia Waltz for Guitar and Violin Violin & Guitar adaptation written for Sharon Isbin 2009 World Premiere	Mark O'Connor (b. 1961)
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*Mark O'Connor, violin/Sharon Isbin, guitar*

Tickets for the Sharon Isbin and Mark O'Connor engagement, which range from \$45 - \$75, are on sale now at the Harris Theater box office located in Millennium Park at 205 E. Randolph Dr., by calling 312-334-7777 or by visiting [www.HarrisTheaterChicago.org](http://www.HarrisTheaterChicago.org).

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**All programs, prices and dates are subject to change.**

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Opened in 2003, the Harris Theater's mission is to partner and collaborate with an array of Chicago's emerging and mid-sized performing arts organizations to help them build the resources and infrastructure necessary to achieve artistic growth and long-term organizational sustainability. The Harris Theater for

Music and Dance was the first multi-use performing arts venue to be built in the Chicago downtown area since 1929 and today the Theater continues to host the most diverse offerings of any venue in Chicago, featuring the city's world-renowned music and dance institutions and the *Harris Theater Presents* series of acclaimed national and international companies. To learn more about the season at the Harris Theater, visit [www.HarrisTheaterChicago.org](http://www.HarrisTheaterChicago.org) or call the box office at 312-334-7777 to request a brochure.

For additional information about the Harris Theater for Music and Dance, Chicago's state-of-the art 1,470 seat performance venue, please visit [www.HarrisTheaterChicago.org](http://www.HarrisTheaterChicago.org).

For high-res images please contact Betsy Shea, Harris Theater for Music and Dance at 312.334.2459 or [bshea@harristheaterchicago.org](mailto:bshea@harristheaterchicago.org).

**The Harris Theater is pleased to announce that UBS is serving as the 2009-2010 Season Sponsor.**

**United Airlines is the Official Airline of the Harris Theater.**

**The Harris Theater gratefully acknowledges the Irving Harris Foundation for its leadership support of the Presenting Fund.**

**The Irving Harris Foundation is the Presenting Sponsor of the Sharon Isbin and Mark O'Connor engagement.**

**Windy City Media Group is the Media Partner for the Sharon Isbin and Mark O'Connor engagement.**

**The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation is the Lead Underwriter of the Harris Theater's Rental Subsidy Program.**

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