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## **Award-Winning Violinist Returns to Perform with Gardner-Webb Orchestra**

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# Award-Winning Violinist Returns to Perform with Gardner-Webb Orchestra

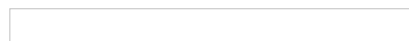
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Office of University  
Communications

November 20, 2018

*Program Also Features Crest High School Chamber Orchestra and GWU Violin Professors*

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C.—Award-winning violinist Mark O'Connor returns this year to solo with the Gardner-Webb University Orchestra. The concert will be Dec. 3 at 8 p.m. in Dover Theatre inside the Lutz-Yelton Convocation Center.



Mark O'Connor

His wife, violinist Maggie O'Connor, will also make an encore appearance.

“Mark O'Connor will be performing movements from his composition, ‘The Improvised Violin Concerto,’ in which the orchestra parts are set, but he improvises his entire solo live,” shared Dr. Patricia Sparti, GWU orchestra conductor and professor of music. “Music writers have estimated that Mark is the only living violinist that would be capable of playing this solo. Also on the program are O'Connor/Meyer ‘Amazing Grace,’ Gershwin ‘Porgy and Bess,’ Sarasate ‘Navarro,’ Verdi ‘Triumphal March’ from ‘Aida,’ and the finale from Dvorak ‘New World Symphony.’”

Other special guests include the Crest High School Chamber Orchestra, directed by Peter Strickland, '97 alumnus; and faculty distinguished artists, Calin Lupanu, concertmaster, Charlotte Symphony and GWU professor of violin and Monica Boboc, Charlotte Symphony and GWU professor of violin.



The concert is free and open to the public, but an offering will be received to provide scholarships for high school and college students to attend the Second Annual Mark O'Connor String Workshop at GWU on March 23, 2019. Last year, more than 120 musicians attended the event. A suggested minimum donation is \$10.

O'Connor plays all styles of music. He won the Grand Master Fiddler Championships at age 13—the youngest person ever to do so. He also won a record-breaking six Country Music Association Musician-of-The-Year Awards in a row in Nashville, Tenn. One of his teachers was Stéphane Grappelli, who is regarded as the finest jazz violinist of the 20th century. O'Connor was also a member of one of the greatest acoustic bands of all time, Strength in Numbers, with four legendary musicians—Bela Fleck, Sam Bush, Jerry Douglas and Edgar Meyer. He has sold over 2 million CD's as a recording artist.

After the concert, the O'Connors will have items for sale and be available to sign autographs and pose for pictures. Their appearance is also sponsored by the GWU Distinguished Artist Series and the Alfred & Shirley Wampler Caudill Foundation.

**Auxiliary aids will be made available to persons with disabilities upon request 48 hours prior to the event. Please call 704-406-2155 or email [disabilityservices@gardner-webb.edu](mailto:disabilityservices@gardner-webb.edu) with your request.**

*Located in the North Carolina foothills, Gardner-Webb University is a private, Christian, liberal arts university that prepares students to become critical thinkers, effective leaders and compassionate servants in the global community. Emphasizing a strong student-centered experience and rigorous academics, Gardner-Webb is a place where Christian conviction meets intellectual freedom. Ignite your future at [Gardner-Webb.edu](http://Gardner-Webb.edu).*