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Grammy Award-Winning Violinist Mark O'Connor to Perform at Gardner-Webb

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Office of University
Communications

November 21, 2017

Concert Features GWU and Crest High Orchestras and Other Guests

By Katie Furr '20, Intern for Communications

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C.—Award-winning violinist Mark O'Connor will be the featured soloist in a concert on Monday, Dec. 4, with the GWU Orchestra and the Crest High School Orchestra of Shelby, N.C. O'Connor's wife, Maggie, and other guests are also on the program, which will be held at 8 p.m. in Dover Theatre.

Violinist Mark O'Connor

“Mark O'Connor is a world-famous violinist who plays bluegrass, jazz, blues, and Americana,” shared Dr. Patricia Sparti, professor of music and director of Orchestral Activities. “We are very honored and delighted to have Mark and Maggie O'Connor perform with us on this concert. We look forward to many more collaborations in the future. We will play two songs composed by O'Connor and works by Mendelssohn, Sibelius, Offenbach, and Hans Zimmer—everything from art music to bluegrass, jazz, blues, Americana, and movie music.”

At age 13, O'Connor became the youngest person ever to win the Grand Master Fiddler Championships and has since won the title three more times. In his 20s, he was a member of the ground-breaking acoustic band, Strength in Numbers, with music legends, Bela Fleck, Sam Bush, Jerry Douglas and Edgar Meyer. A three-time Grammy award-winner, O'Connor has sold over 2 million albums. He has recorded with many artists—Dolly Parton, James Taylor, Paul Simon, Randy Travis, and more. His 2016 release with the O'Connor Band received a Grammy nomination for “Best Bluegrass Album” after spending nearly six months at the top of Billboard's bluegrass album chart.

GWU orchestra

The Gardner-Webb Orchestra has 76 members, including students, faculty and musicians from the community. The group performs several times a year, including educational concerts for school children. Representing the Crest High School Orchestra will be 18

students playing violin, viola, cello and bass. Their director is GWU Alumnus Peter Strickland. He was recently awarded the Western Regional Orchestra Director of the Year by the North Carolina Music Educators Association.

The concert is free and open to the public. However, an offering will be accepted during the event to assist high school and college students who will be attending the Mark O'Connor String Workshop, scheduled for March 24, 2018, at Gardner-Webb.

Auxiliary aids will be made available to persons with disabilities upon request 48 hours prior to the event. Please call 704.406.4264 or email servicerequests@gardner-webb.edu with your request.

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