



## Grammy-winning Guitarist Jason Vieaux

### Soloist with Nashville Symphony on World Premiere Recording of Jonathan Leshnoff's Guitar Concerto Giancarlo Guerrero, conducting

With additional works by Leshnoff: *Symphony No. 4*  
"Heichalos" and *Starburst* in the recording debut of the  
*Violins of Hope* – historic instruments once played by Jewish  
musicians – to be released on Holocaust Remembrance Day

Release Date: May 2, 2019 | Naxos Records  
CDs available to press on request

Press registered with the Naxos B2B can download the album  
[here](#). For access to the Naxos B2B, contact Mara Miller:  
[mmiller@naxosusa.com](mailto:mmiller@naxosusa.com)

View the album trailer [here](#).

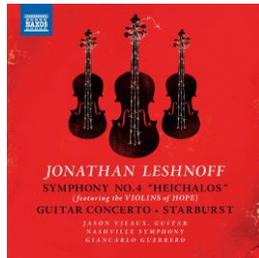


Photo by Tyler Boye and album cover available in high resolution upon request.

**Nashville, TN/New York, NY** – On May 2, 2019, **Naxos Records** will release the world premiere recording of Jonathan Leshnoff's Guitar Concerto, recorded by Grammy-winning guitarist **Jason Vieaux** with the **Nashville Symphony** and conductor **Giancarlo Guerrero**. Leshnoff calls the work, "an exploration of worlds, from its mysterious beginnings to its fiery, dance-inspired finale."

"I am so pleased to have recorded this exhilarating piece of music – and with such a fantastic orchestra," says Vieaux. "It is quite beautiful, and in a technical sense even advanced some of my chops along the way! I have never had to practice any piece for performance more perhaps than this one, but it was well worth the effort, because the concerto has made me a better guitarist."

Though he had already composed 12 concertos, Leshnoff does not play the guitar himself, so this commission from the Baltimore Symphony and Marin Alsop presented a unique challenge. "It's notoriously difficult to write for the instrument unless you play it," Leshnoff says. Nonetheless, he immersed himself in studying the literature, crafting a work Nashville Symphony's Music Director Giancarlo Guerrero considers "one of the greatest additions to the guitar and orchestra repertoire in recent years."

This singular new collection also features Leshnoff's **Symphony No. 4 "Heichalos,"** which was written for the **Violins of Hope**, a collection of restored instruments played by Jewish musicians during the Holocaust.

Jewish spirituality has provided an inexhaustible source of inspiration for Leshnoff, as the works on this recording illustrate. Commissioned by the Nashville Symphony for its Violins of Hope Nashville community initiative, Symphony No. 4 "Heichalos" is based on an ancient mystical text, which Leshnoff tapped as a source of inspiration for exploring the powerful resonances of these historic instruments. Restored by Israeli luthiers Amnon and Avshi Weinstein, the Violins of Hope have been the subject of a bestselling book and acclaimed documentary, and today they stand as symbols of resilience and survival in the face of unimaginable suffering. This recording marks the first time the Violins of Hope have been featured on a commercial album release.

“I include reflective questions in the score to exude deep meditation from the musicians,” Leshnoff says of his Symphony No. 4. “I see the Violins of Hope as the physical embodiment of Jewish survival. And I see my symphony as a representation of the spiritual and ethical embodiment of this Jewish survival.”

*Starburst*, the brief work that closes this recording, “is a sparkling display of the infinite energy of the cosmos,” says the composer. The piece was premiered in 2010 by the Baltimore Symphony and continues to be Leshnoff’s most performed work, presented by scores of orchestras as an energetic concert-opener.

“This recording showcases different sides of Jonathan Leshnoff’s compositional style,” says **Giancarlo Guerrero**. “*Violins of Hope* had incredible social impact here in Nashville and was one of the most worthwhile initiatives the Nashville Symphony has ever undertaken. It provided us the perfect opportunity to commission Jonathan Leshnoff to write something for these historic instruments, and his Symphony No. 4 gives us the chance to hear so much more of his musical language. He was not afraid to explore new sounds and ideas, and the results are tremendously powerful. Along with his Guitar Concerto and *Starburst*, this breathtaking new work reveals his profound depth as an artist, and this collection reminds us of the ways that music has the power to keep history alive, to give voice to the voiceless, to heal, to transcend and to express what cannot be conveyed through language.”

### **About Jason Vieaux**

Grammy-winner Jason Vieaux, “among the elite of today’s classical guitarists” (*Gramophone*), is the guitarist that goes beyond the classical. NPR describes Vieaux as, “perhaps the most precise and soulful classical guitarist of his generation.” Among his extensive discography is the 2015 Grammy Award winning album for Best Classical Instrumental Solo, *Play*.

In addition to this premiere recording of the Jonathan Leshnoff Guitar Concerto, in 2019 Jason will release a new album with the Escher String Quartet featuring Boccherini’s Guitar Quintet and Aaron Jay Kernis’ *100 Greatest Dance Hits* (Azica). Along with his Grammy-winning 2015 solo release *Play*, his previous albums include a performance of Jeff Beal’s “Six Sixteen” Guitar Concerto with the Norrköping Symphony Orchestra (BIS); *Infusion* (Azica) with accordionist/bandoneonist Julien Labro; Ginastera’s Guitar Sonata, on *Ginastera: One Hundred* (Oberlin Music) produced by harpist Yolanda Kondonassis; *Together* (Azica), a duo album with Kondonassis; a recording of Astor Piazzolla’s music with Julien Labro and A Far Cry Chamber Orchestra; *Bach: Works for Lute, Vol. 1; Images of Metheny*; and *Sevilla: The Music of Isaac Albeniz*. Vieaux was the first classical musician to be featured on NPR’s popular “Tiny Desk” series.

Vieaux has earned a reputation for putting his expressiveness and virtuosity at the service of a remarkably wide range of music, and his schedule of performing, and recording commitments is distinguished throughout the U.S. and abroad.

Jason Vieaux has performed as concerto soloist with over 100 orchestras, including Cleveland, Toronto, Houston, Nashville, San Diego, Buffalo, Auckland Philharmonia, and Orchestra of St. Luke’s. Recent highlights include performances at Caramoor Festival as Artist-in-Residence, Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, Philadelphia Chamber Music Society, Curtis Presents, Phillips Collection, National Gallery of Art, Buenos Aires’ Teatro Colon, Amsterdam’s Concertgebouw, New York’s 92Y, and Ravinia Festival. He has forged his reputation as a first-rate chamber musician and programmer through performances with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, Bard Music Festival, Music@Menlo, San Francisco Performances, Cleveland Chamber Music Society, Strings Music Festival, Grand Teton, and many others.

Recent and upcoming chamber music collaborators include the Escher Quartet; Grammy-winning mezzo-soprano Sasha Cooke; violinists Anne Akiko Meyers, Kristin Lee, and Tessa Lark; acclaimed harpist Yolanda Kondonassis; and accordion/bandoneon virtuoso Julien Labro. Vieaux’s passion for new music has fostered premieres of works by Jonathan Leshnoff, Avner Dorman, Jeff Beal, Dan Visconti, David Ludwig, Vivian Fung, José Luis Merlin, and more. Jason recently premiered Visconti’s “Living Language” Guitar Concerto with the California Symphony and recorded Leshnoff’s Guitar Concerto live with the Nashville Symphony.

In 2012, the Jason Vieaux School of Classical Guitar was launched with ArtistWorks Inc., an unprecedented technological interface that provides one-on-one online study with Vieaux for guitar students around the world. In 2011, he co-founded the guitar department at the Curtis Institute of Music, and in 2015 was invited to inaugurate the guitar program at the Eastern Music Festival. Vieaux has taught at the Cleveland Institute of Music since 1997, heading the guitar department since 2001.

Vieaux is affiliated with Philadelphia's Astral Artists. In 1992 he was awarded the prestigious GFA International Guitar Competition First Prize, the event's youngest winner ever. He is also honored with a Naumburg Foundation top prize, a Cleveland Institute of Music Distinguished Alumni Award, and a Salon di Virtuosi Career Grant. In 1995, Vieaux was an Artistic Ambassador of the U.S. to Southeast Asia. His primary teachers were Jeremy Sparks and John Holmquist. Jason Vieaux is represented by Jonathan Wentworth Associates, Ltd and plays a 2013 Gernot Wagner guitar with Augustine strings. For more information, visit [www.jasonvieaux.com](http://www.jasonvieaux.com).

### **About the Nashville Symphony**

One of Tennessee's largest and longest-running nonprofit performing arts organizations, the Nashville Symphony has been an integral part of the Music City sound since 1946. Led by music director Giancarlo Guerrero and president and CEO Alan D. Valentine, the 83-member ensemble performs more than 150 concerts annually, with a focus on contemporary American orchestral music through collaborations with composers including Jennifer Higdon, Terry Riley, Joan Tower, Aaron Jay Kernis, Michael Daugherty, Christopher Rouse, John Harbison and Jonathan Leshnoff. The orchestra is equally renowned for its commissioning and recording projects with Nashville-based artists including bassist Edgar Meyer, banjoist Béla Fleck, singer-songwriter Ben Folds and electric bassist Victor Wooten. The Nashville Symphony is one of the most active recording orchestras in the US, with 30 releases. Together, these recordings have earned a total of 24 GRAMMY® Award nominations and 13 GRAMMY® Awards, including two for Best Orchestral Performance. Schermerhorn Symphony Center is home to the Nashville Symphony and widely regarded as one of the finest concert halls in the US.

### **About Giancarlo Guerrero**

Six-time GRAMMY® Award-winning conductor Giancarlo Guerrero is music director of the Nashville Symphony and the Wrocław Philharmonic Orchestra in Poland, as well as principal guest conductor of the Gulbenkian Orchestra in Lisbon, Portugal. He has championed contemporary American music through commissions and recordings, presenting nine world premieres with the Nashville Symphony by composers including Michael Daugherty and Terry Riley. As part of this commitment, he helped guide the creation of Nashville Symphony's Composer Lab & Workshop initiative. In North America, Guerrero has appeared with the orchestras of Baltimore, Boston, Chicago, Cleveland, Detroit, Dallas, Houston, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, Toronto, and the National Symphony Orchestra. He has developed a strong international profile working with the Frankfurt Radio Symphony, the Brussels Philharmonic, the Deutsche Radio Philharmonie, the Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France, the Netherlands Philharmonic Orchestra, and the London Philharmonic Orchestra. An advocate for music education, he works regularly with the Curtis Institute of Music, the Colburn School in Los Angeles and the National Youth Orchestra (NYO2) in New York.

### **About Jonathan Leshnoff**

Distinguished by *The New York Times* as "a leader of contemporary American lyricism," composer Jonathan Leshnoff is renowned for his music's striking harmonies, structural complexity and powerful themes. Leshnoff's works have been performed by more than 60 orchestras worldwide, including commissions from Carnegie Hall; the Atlanta, Baltimore, Dallas, Kansas City, and Nashville Symphony orchestras; the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra; and the IRIS and Philadelphia orchestras. This is the fifth album devoted to Leshnoff's music on the Naxos American Classics imprint. Celebrated by *Fanfare* magazine as "the real thing," Leshnoff's music has been lauded by *Strings Magazine* as "distinct from anything else that's out there" and by *The Baltimore Sun* as "remarkably assured, cohesively constructed and radiantly lyrical." Leshnoff's catalog is vast, including several symphonies and oratorios in addition to numerous concerti, solo works, and chamber works. He is a professor of music at Towson University, Maryland. "My essential aesthetic has always been that I have to communicate and take people on a journey," Leshnoff says. "Where listeners decide to go, what they do with the music they hear, is of course going to be based on their own lives and what is inside them."