

**PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY & IRVINE BARCLAY THEATRE PRESENT  
BACH MEETS BLUEGRASS WITH TESSA LARK & MICHAEL THURBER**



Tessa Lark & Michael Thurber/Lauren Desberg

IRVINE, CA (April 17, 2024)—The Philharmonic Society of Orange County and Irvine Barclay Theatre present “Bach Meets Bluegrass,” with Grammy®-nominated violinist Tessa Lark and virtuoso composer/double bassist Michael Thurber at the Irvine Barclay Theatre on Tuesday, May 14, 2024, at 8pm. This classically trained duo brilliantly fuses together their bluegrass roots (Lark) and jazz composition roots (Thurber) for a unique blend of classical, folk, and original music, including Bach’s Inventions arranged for violin and bass, as featured on their 2019 album

*Invention.* Audience members are invited to participate in pre-show activities at 7pm in the Irvine Barclay Theatre lobby for a Distinctive Experience—with complimentary light bites.

This concert is part of the Eclectic Orange Series sponsored by the Jelinek Family Trust.

Lark and Thurber have joined forces to create a duo unlike any other. By blending their classical and American music influences, they've crafted a wholly original sound, which they share with audiences across the country through their charismatic live performances.

"This duo is a place for us to explore our varied musical influences," explains Lark. "I grew up in Kentucky playing bluegrass long before I started my career as a classical musician, so I've always longed for an outlet to integrate my American music roots into my performances."

Thurber adds, "Our diverse musical appetite is what has always drawn Tessa and I together. The fiddle and bass are both such versatile instruments that have played vital roles in so many different musical traditions around the world. It feels very natural to explore the full range of our musical heritage and not be bound by genre."

Prior to forming their duo, both Lark and Thurber enjoyed successful careers of their own. In the classical music world, Lark has earned many of the top competition prizes available to young artists including, among many others: a 2018 Borletti-Buitoni Trust Fellowship, a 2016 Avery Fisher Career Grant, Silver Medal in the 2014 International Violin Competition of Indianapolis, and a first-place finish in the 2012 Naumburg International Violin Competition. In 2020 she was nominated for a Grammy® in the Best Classical Instrumental Solo category and received one of Lincoln Center's prestigious Emerging Artist Awards: the special Hunt Family Award.

Lark also solos regularly with many of the major orchestras around the world, from the Royal Scottish National Orchestra to Seattle Symphony, and has appeared in recital in such prestigious venues and series as Amsterdam's Concertgebouw and Carnegie Hall's Distinctive Debuts series in Weill Hall (2017). She made her London concerto debut with the UK premiere of Victoria Borisova-Ollas' *A Portrait of a Lady by Swan Lake* for violin with the BBC Symphony

Orchestra in March 2023.

Thurber has a reputation as one of the most versatile musical talents of his generation.

Whether playing bass on *The Late Show with Stephen Colbert*, composing music for the Royal Shakespeare Company, co-founding the smash YouTube channel CDZA, or hosting his “Thurber Theater” variety show at Joe’s Pub, Thurber’s musical voice defies genre and category.

Thurber has produced/co-written records in the R&B, Indie, Jazz, and Classical spaces, including *Downbeat Magazine’s* Critic Pick *Alma Oscura* and *Gramophone* Critic Pick *Stradgrass*. Most recently, Michael has been releasing singles under his own name.

Throughout their respective careers, Tessa and Michael have had the privilege of collaborating with some of the world’s leading musicians across a wide variety of genres. Just to name a few: Tessa has collaborated with Mitsuko Uchida, Edgar Meyer, Itzhak Perlman, and Mark O’Connor, while Michael has worked with Yo-Yo Ma, James Taylor, Vulfpeck, Jon Batiste, and CeeLo Green.

Irvine Barclay Theatre is located at 4242 Campus Dr, Irvine, CA 92612. Ticket prices start at \$25 and are available at the Philharmonic Society box office at (949) 553-2422, online at [www.philharmonicsociety.org](http://www.philharmonicsociety.org), at the Irvine Barclay Theatre box office at (949) 854-4646 and online at [www.TheBarclay.org](http://www.TheBarclay.org).

#### **ABOUT THE PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY:**

Founded in 1954 as Orange County’s first music organization, the Philharmonic Society of Orange County presents national and international performances of the highest quality and provides dynamic and innovative music education programs for individuals of all ages to enhance the lives of Orange County audiences through music.

Since its inception, the Philharmonic Society has evolved and grown with the county’s changing landscape, presenting artists and orchestras who set the standard for artistic achievement from

Itzhak Perlman, Gustavo Dudamel, Yo-Yo Ma, and Renée Fleming to the Berlin Philharmonic, Vienna Philharmonic, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, and many others. In addition, the Philharmonic Society celebrates multi-disciplinary performances under its Eclectic Orange brand and embraces music from a wide range of countries with its World Music performances. Its celebrated family concerts introduce children to classical music with creative and inspiring performances, instilling music appreciation for future generations.

The Philharmonic Society's nationally recognized Youth Music Education Programs, offered free of charge, engage more than 100,000 students annually through curriculum-based music education programs that aim to inspire, expand imaginations, and encourage learning at all levels. These programs are made possible by the Committees of the Philharmonic Society comprised of 500 volunteer members who provide more than 90,000 hours of in-kind service each year. As a key youth program, the exceptional Orange County Youth Symphony and String Ensemble provide top-tier training to the area's most talented young musicians through multi-level ensemble instruction, leadership training, touring opportunities, challenging professional repertoire, and performances in world-class venues. The Philharmonic Society also promotes life-long learning by connecting with colleges and universities to conduct masterclasses and workshops and providing pre-concert lectures to introduce audiences to program selections.

#### **ABOUT IRVINE BARCLAY THEATRE:**

Irvine Barclay Theatre is a 750-seat "jewel box" theater renowned for its intimate atmosphere and superb acoustics. Since opening its doors in 1990, Irvine Barclay Theatre has developed into one of California's most imaginative performing arts showcases, welcoming more than 2.6 million patrons over the last 33 years to an impressive array of varied performances by internationally recognized artists.

A unique collaborative venture between the City of Irvine, the University of California, Irvine, and private donors, Irvine Barclay Theatre is operated as an independent 501(c) (3) non-profit organization. Irvine Barclay Theatre is located at 4242 Campus Drive, Irvine, California 92612

adjacent to UC Irvine. For tickets or more information, please visit [TheBarclay.org](http://TheBarclay.org) or call (949) 854-4646.

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**WHAT:** *Bach Meets Bluegrass*  
Tessa Lark, violin  
Michael Thurber, bass

**WHEN:** Tuesday, May 14, 2024, 8pm

**PROGRAM:** **Tessa LARK and Michael THURBER:** *Wooden Soldier*  
**BACH:** Two-Part Invention No. 1 in C major, BWV 772 (arr. for violin and bass)  
**Tessa LARK and Michael THURBER:** *Tumble Time*  
**BACH:** Two-Part Invention No. 4 in D minor, BWV 775 (arr. for violin and bass)  
**Tessa LARK and Michael THURBER:** *Cedar & Sage*  
**BACH:** Two-Part Invention No. 2 in C minor, BWV 773 (arr. for violin and bass)  
**BACH:** Two-Part Invention No. 8 in F major, BWV 779 (arr. for violin and bass)  
**Tessa LARK and Michael THURBER:** *Weather Vane*  
**BACH:** Two-Part Invention No. 10 in G major, BWV 781 (arr. for violin and bass)  
**BACH:** Two-Part Invention No. 15 in B minor, BWV 786 (arr. for violin and bass)  
**Tessa LARK and Michael THURBER:** *Tom & Nancied*  
**BACH:** Two-Part Invention No. 6 in E major, BWV 777 (arr. for violin and bass)  
**Tessa LARK and Michael THURBER:** *Until We Meet Again*

**WHERE:** Irvine Barclay Theatre  
4242 Campus Dr, Irvine, CA 92612

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**AND**

**INFORMATION:** Tickets are also available at the Irvine Barclay Theatre box office at (949) 854-4646, and online at [www.TheBarclay.org](http://www.TheBarclay.org)