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Two-time Grammy Award Winner Vince Mendoza Featured Guest at IWU's 2005 Symposium of Contemporary Music

January 17, 2005

BLOOMINGTON, Ill.-Music composer and arranger Vince Mendoza, a two-time Grammy award winner and 12-time nominee, will be the featured composer and guest conductor at Illinois Wesleyan University's Symposium of Contemporary Music.

Mendoza will be the guest conductor at the event on Friday, Jan. 21, which will celebrate 30 years of Tom Streeter's IWU Jazz Festival. Streeter is Professor of Brass Instruments and Theory and director of IWU's Jazz Ensemble.

The symposium, presented as part of the IWU New Music Series, is free and open to the public. All events will be held in Presser Hall's Westbrook Auditorium, 1210 Park St., Bloomington.

At 7:30 p.m., Mendoza will conduct the IWU Jazz Ensemble and the Illinois Wesleyan Civic Orchestra in performances of his compositions and arrangements. A reception will follow the concert in the Presser Hall reception room.

There will also be a panel discussion, "Notation and Improvisation in the Performing Arts," at 3 p.m. on Jan. 21. The panel will consist of Mendoza; Sara Freeman, assistant professor of theatre arts; Jean MacFarland Kerr, associate professor of theatre arts/stage movement; Thomas Streeter, professor of brass instruments and theory; and David Vayo, professor of composition and theory, will be the moderator. Vayo is also director of the symposium.

Professor of Music Steven W. Eggleston's Wesleyan Civic Orchestra will perform such works as "Dancer in the Dark Overture" composed by Björk, arranged by Mendoza and "Otis and Marlena" written by Joni Mitchell, arranged by Mendoza for which Kathryn Lachey, a sophomore music education major from Arlington Heights, Ill., will perform vocals. The orchestra also will perform Mendoza's "Elder Wings," "Sanctus," and "Miracle Child."

The IWU Jazz Ensemble will play "Silhouette," "Bossa Antigua," "Rain Codes," "I Dreamt of You," and "Just Say Joe," also written by Mendoza.

Established in 1954, the symposium promotes and encourages the performance of contemporary music and recognizes contemporary composers. Mendoza, who is recognized by fans around the world for his compositional conducting talents, is the first guest from the jazz world to headline the event.

Mendoza, who has been heralded by critics as a master of contemporary idioms, is the principal guest conductor of the Metropole Orchestra of the Netherlands. He has been commissioned to compose and arrange for such groups as the Turtle Island String Quartet, Berlin Philharmonic, BBC orchestra, Debussy Trio, L.A. Guitar Quartet and the Köln Radio Orchestra. He also conducts concerts of his music in Europe, Japan, and the United Kingdom and has appeared at the Montreux and Northsea Jazz Festivals. His music also was featured at the Berlin Jazz Festival.

Mendoza's arrangements can be heard on Lars van Trier's film "Dancer in the Dark" featuring Björk as well as Joni Mitchell's orchestral albums "Both Sides Now" and "Travelogue," for which he won his second Grammy award in 2004. His work can also be heard on the Yellowjackets' "Greenhouse," and with artists including Elvis Costello, Chaka Khan, Al Jarreau, Bobby McFerrin, Al DiMeola, Gino Vannelli, Herbie Hancock and Sheryl Crow, among others. His television music has been nominated for an Emmy.

Artists such as Gary Burton/Pat Metheny, Michael Brecker, Charlie Haden and John Abercrombie have featured Mendoza's compositions and arrangements on their albums. His extensive discography includes his solo albums on Blue Note, "Start Here" and "Instructions Inside." His newest CD, "Epiphany," features the London Symphony Orchestra.

Mendoza, originally from Connecticut, resides in Los Angeles. He has degrees from the Ohio State University and the University of Southern California.



Vince Mendoza