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**Renowned pianist Emanuel Ax returns to Hilbert Circle Theatre stage to perform Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 4 with Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra in concerts Feb. 1 & 2**

*Led by guest conductor Giancarlo Guerrero, the program also includes world premiere commission by New Am composer William Britelle and tone poems by Strauss and Tchaikovsky*

INDIANAPOLIS – An up-and-coming American composer and veteran American pianist dominate the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra's concert weekend beginning in February. The ISO and guest conductor Giancarlo Guerrero present the world premiere commission of New Amsterdam composer William Britelle's *Dunes*, and welcome back piano legend Emanuel Ax for Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 4 in Lilly *Classical Series* performances Friday, Feb. 1, at 8 p.m., and Saturday, Feb. 2, at 5:30 p.m.

The ISO's concert opens with an ISO world-premiere commission by American composer William Britelle. Co-director of Brooklyn-based New Amsterdam Records and New Amsterdam Presents, Britelle's work *Dunes* is a strongly visual work — the composer worked with filmmaker Stephen Taylor to create a short film of the dunes of Death Valley, a movie which served as the inspiration for the piece. *Dunes*, presented by the orchestra alone, musically portrays the images from the film and focuses on the sweeping and beautiful desertscapes.

The concert continues with Ludwig van Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 4 performed by acclaimed pianist Emanuel Ax. The concerto, completed in 1806 and revived by Mendelssohn 30 years later, is performed and recorded often and is widely considered a staple in the piano concerto literature. Serene intimacy dominates the first movement of the work. The slow movement, with its gruff strings calmed by the soloist's melodies, has been likened to the legend of Orpheus taming wild beasts with his lyre, and the concerto finishes with boisterous energy in the final movement.

Following intermission, Maestro Guerrero returns to the stage for Richard Strauss' seminal tone poem, *Death and Transfiguration*. Composed in four parts and finished in 1889, the work depicts the life of an artist, from the innocence of boyhood to the struggles of manhood and ultimately the thoughts of death and much-longed-for heavenly transfiguration. The evening's performance concludes with Tchaikovsky's symphonic poem, *Francesca di Rimini*, written about 10 years earlier, in 1876. Drawn from Dante's depiction of an adulterous noblewoman and her confinement to Hell, the musical tale ranges from plaintive to fiery before closing with the image of the storyteller fainting in sympathy.

Ticket prices for the Friday and Saturday performances range from \$20 to \$75 each and may be ordered by calling the Hilbert Circle Theatre Box Office at (317) 639-4300, in person, or online by visiting

[www.IndianapolisSymphony.org](http://www.IndianapolisSymphony.org). To order by telephone outside of Indianapolis, call toll free (800) 366-8457. For evening performances, patrons are invited to attend *Words on Music*, a 30-minute pre-concert talk that features musicians, guest artists and conductors. For this *Words on Music* program, William Brittelle will provide audience members context about his new work and will talk about the new partnership between the ISO and New Am.

Eli Lilly and Company is the Title Sponsor of the entire 2012-2013 Lilly *Classical Series* and ExactTarget is the Premiere Sponsor for the evening performances of the Lilly *Classical Series*.

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### Artist Biographies:

**Giancarlo Guerrero**, a native of Costa Rica, is Music Director of the Nashville Symphony Orchestra and Principal Guest Conductor of The Cleveland Orchestra Miami Residency. Last year, he led the NSO to a Grammy Award for Joseph Schwantner's Concerto for Percussion and Orchestra. Their recording of Michael Daugherty's *Metropolis* Symphony and *Deux Ex Machina* won three Grammys Awards in 2011. He has collaborated with and championed the works of American composers John Adams, John Corigliano, Osvaldo Golijov, Jennifer Higdon, Michael Daugherty, Roberto Sierra and Richard Danielpour.

This season, Mr. Guerrero debuts with the BBC Symphony Orchestra, Deutsches Symphonie Orchester Berlin and Norwegian Radio Orchestra. He returns to the Boston and Toronto symphonies, The Philadelphia Orchestra, Brussels Philharmonic, the Polish National Radio Symphony Orchestra, São Paulo State Symphony Orchestra, the Adelaide Symphony and Auckland Philharmonia. He returns yearly to Caracas, Venezuela, to conduct the Orquesta Sinfónica Simón Bolívar and to work with young musicians in the El Sistema music program. This season, he works the student orchestras of Curtis Institute and the Colburn School.

Mr. Guerrero has appeared with many major North American orchestras, including Baltimore, Cincinnati, Dallas, Detroit, Houston, Milwaukee and the National Symphony in Washington, D.C., the Los Angeles Philharmonic at the Hollywood Bowl, The Cleveland Orchestra at Blossom Music Festival and Indiana University summer orchestra festival. In June 2004, Mr. Guerrero was honored with the Helen M. Thompson Award by the American Symphony Orchestra League, recognizing outstanding achievement among young conductors nationwide.

Mr. Guerrero holds degrees from Baylor and Northwestern universities. He was previously Music Director of the Eugene Symphony in Oregon and from 1999 to 2004, served as Associate Conductor of the Minnesota Orchestra.

Born in Lvov, Poland, **Emanuel Ax** moved to Canada with his family when he was a young boy. He studied at The Juilliard School and Columbia University, capturing public attention in 1974 when he won the first Arthur Rubinstein International Piano Competition in Tel Aviv. In 1975, he won the Michaels Award of Young Concert Artists, followed four years later by the coveted Avery Fisher Prize.

As curator and participant with the Chicago Symphony for a two-week spring residency "Keys to the City," he performed multiple roles as leader and collaborator in a festival celebrating the many varied facets of the piano and its repertoire. As Artist in Residence with the New York Philharmonic for the 2012-2013 season, he will appear for multiple weeks at Lincoln Center with repertoire ranging from Bach to Christopher Rouse, in addition to a spring tour with the orchestra to Europe. He will return to orchestras in

Los Angeles, St. Louis, Atlanta, Detroit, Washington and Pittsburgh, where he is a beloved regular. His 2011-2012 season included returns to the symphonies of Boston, Houston, Toronto, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Detroit, Cincinnati, the New York and Los Angeles Philharmonics and the San Francisco Symphony, with whom he collaborated in the "American Mavericks" festival, repeated in Ann Arbor and Carnegie Hall.

Mr. Ax has been an exclusive Sony Classical recording artist since 1987. Due for release later this year is a recital disc of works from Haydn to Schumann to Copland, reflecting their different uses of the "variation" concept. He has received Grammy® Awards for the second and third volumes of his cycle of Haydn's piano sonatas and has also made a series of Grammy-winning recordings with Yo-Yo Ma of the Beethoven and Brahms sonatas for cello and piano. Mr. Ax resides in New York City with his wife, pianist Yoko Nozaki. He is a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and holds honorary doctorates of music from Yale and Columbia Universities.

Born in 1976 in North Carolina, Brooklyn-based composer **William Britelle** is one of America's dazzling young stars. Grounded in the classical music tradition, he has embraced pop and rock music as well as elements of his musical voice. His string quartet *Future Shock*, later renamed *Loving the Chambered Nautilus*, offers series of electro-acoustic chamber pieces, reimagining chamber music for the 21st century, "juxtaposing the energy and sonic languages of pop drum and synth programming with classical forms and instrumentation." He explained that form is something to start with and then "stretch it to the breaking point ... it's kind of cool to have something to rail against. ..." He has been described as a gentle iconoclast who does not want to destroy what came before him. His chief mentors have been Pulitzer Prize-winning composer David Del Tredici, jazz pianist Mike Longo and punk guitarist Richard Lloyd. He has learned from the best and deservedly is enjoying the full flight of a spectacular burgeoning career. In addition to composing, promoting new music, promoting new composers, co-founding New Amsterdam Records and attending festivals all claim his attention.