

EDMAR CASTANEDA



Artist Partner Program presents

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Friday, October 2, 2015 . 7PM & 9PM

Robert & Arlene Kogod Theatre

Edmar Castaneda – Harp

Andrea Tierra – Vocals

Dave Silliman – Drums

Shlomi Cohen – Soprano Saxophone

This performance will last approximately **one hour 10 minutes with no intermission**.
Video or audio recording of the production is strictly prohibited.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

“The Colombian plays the harp like hardly anyone else on earth. His hands, seemingly powered by two different people, produce a totally unique, symphonic fullness of sound, a rapid-fire of chords, balance of melodic figures and drive, served with euphoric Latin American rhythms, and the improvisatory freedom of a trained jazz musician ... captivating virtuosity, but in no way only virtuosity for its own sake.”

—Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung

“Mr. Castaneda strummed, plucked, rubbed, jabbed and pounded on his cobalt blue Llanera harp as he conjured different-shaped notes, harmonic textures and steady bass rhythms from the instrument’s 34 strings. About the only thing he didn’t do was light it on fire.”

—Wall Street Journal

Edmar Castaneda was born in 1978, in the city of Bogotá, Colombia. Since his move to the United States in 1994, he has taken New York and the world stage by storm with his virtuosic command of the harp -- revolutionizing the way audiences and critics alike consider the instrument. A master of beautifully complex timing, lush colors and dynamic spirit, Castaneda has been described by the *New York Times* as “almost a world unto himself.”

The legendary Paquito D’Rivera, Castaneda’s frequent collaborator, describes him as “an enormous talent. With his versatility and enchanting charisma, he has taken his harp out of the shadows, and become one of the most original musicians in the Big Apple.”

Not unlike other exceptional musicians who have transformed their lives through art, Castaneda’s journey has humble, inspiring beginnings. The son of a musician and a mother who nurtured Castaneda’s obvious natural talents, he embraced the noble folkloric traditions of his native Colombia. The joropo dance classes he attended with his sister were a masterclass in movement,

accompanied by the harp. In the mid-1990s, he moved to New York and studied jazz trumpet, before returning to the harp. Today, on stages all over the world, it is remarkable how Castaneda’s body engulfs his Colombian harp as he crafts almost unbelievable feats of cross-rhythms, layered with chordal nuances to rival even the most celebrated flamenco guitarists, and an incredible blend of musical influences.

“His music draws on the traditional joropo music of the grasslands he absorbed early, as well as tango, Brazilian and flamenco guitar, West African kora and virtuoso jazz pianists like Art Tatum. That’s a fascinating mix, but his technique is the real astonishment. Castaneda juggles lead, rhythm and bass lines, using a variety of hard and soft string attacks to keep those voices distinct — all without giving up the groove.”

—NPR Music

Castaneda’s performing career has recently included feature spots at Paquito D’Rivera’s Carnegie Hall tribute, the DC Jazz Festival, Jazz at Lincoln Center, The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, the Tanglewood Jazz Festival, the 10th World Harp Congress and numerous other dates with artists such as D’Rivera, Wynton Marsalis and the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra, John Scofield, Chico O’Farrill’s Afro-Cuban Jazz Big Band, John Patitucci and many more. Castaneda has been Marcus Miller’s special guest, and he has also opened for Ricki Lee Jones, Diana Krall, The Yellowjackets and Paco De Lucia.

A committed teacher, Castaneda’s residencies have included a week-long initiative and performance at The Banff Centre with fellow faculty member Dave Douglas and other jazz luminaries, as well as an interactive workshop at the Berklee College of Music. This focused on Latin culture, culminating in a full-on tribute to the late great Mambo King, Israel “Cachao” López. He is frequently invited to give masterclasses and workshops in diverse musical contexts worldwide, and is also increasingly recognized as a composer.

EDMAR CASTANEDA ABOUT THE ARTIST (cont.)

Castaneda has released three recordings, collaborating with artists such as John Scofield, Gonzalo Rubalcaba, Miguel Zenon and Marshall Gilkes, and catching the attention of reviewers and legions of fans alike. His latest album, *Double Portion*, was described as “redefining depth, skill and emotion” by Rob Young in *Urban Flux* magazine. About his previous disc, *Entre Cuerdas*, Jeff Tamarkin wrote in *JazzTimes* “it is hard to imagine the Colombian musician has much contemporary competition. That the harp sounds so natural in this context makes you wonder why so few have thought to utilize this many-stringed instrument as a viable lead instrument.”

Together with the French manufacturers, Camac Harps, Castaneda has developed a new instrument. The E C Llanera is a state-of-the-art version of the traditional arpa llanera of Colombia and Venezuela. Alongside its many structural improvements, it is also the first llanera harp with levers. This increases the instrument’s potential for chromaticism and unlocks new musical potential for the instrument and Latin American music.

THE CLARICE AND THE COMMUNITY

The Clarice is building the future of the arts by training, mentoring and presenting the next generation of artists and creative innovators. As artists develop their craft as performers, they must become instigators of meaningful dialogue, creative research and audience connection. These skills are developed through engagement activities both on and off campus. Engagement at The Clarice is characterized by facilitated audience interactions with artists, scholars, and community leaders that are focused on process and research rather than product and performance. The Clarice supports artists in their quest for a connection with audiences through its engagement work.

EDMAR CASTANEDA ENGAGEMENT EVENTS

- While at The Clarice, Colombian-born Castaneda hosted an open harp class for performers of all ages, followed by a reception given by the Virginia Harp Center.
- As part of The Clarice’s community-based participatory research project to learn more about Latino/a audiences in our area, the Langley Park Community Center’s Adelante Family Dinner participants were invited to dinner and a performance by Mr. Castaneda here at The Clarice.