

# Sharon Isbin

## **JOURNEY TO THE NEW WORLD**

Joan Baez & Mark O'Connor (Sony Classical 88697-45456-2)

**2010 GRAMMY AWARD: Best Instrumental Soloist Performance (without Orchestra)**

**63 Consecutive Weeks *BILLBOARD* TOP CLASSICAL CROSSOVER CHART**

**#1 Classical Bestseller Amazon.com, BarnesandNoble.com, iTunes**

"Sharon's exquisite playing allowed me to revisit and fall in love with these songs all over again." – **Joan Baez**

"This new release finds Isbin at her expressive best, her timbral and dynamic shading completely at one with her delicate phrasing. The beautiful *Wild Mountain Thyme* shows off Isbin's gorgeous tone-colour and *cantabile* approach to their fullest advantage. ... Baez breathes life into each and every syllable in a way that many a Lieder singer could only dream of. Isbin proves as sensitive and thoughtful an accompanist as she is a soloist. ... O'Connor plays alternately with wild energy, wistful nostalgia and bluesy swagger. It's discs like this that show what 'cross-over' can really be." – **International Record Review**

"One of the most beguiling, supple and charming musical journeys of the year." – **Soundstage!**

"The beauty and range of Sharon's guitar creates the perfect musical setting and imagery. America and the guitar have become inseparable in their musical manifestations, and Sharon's performance on this recording expresses these connections as richly as you will ever hear." – **Mark O'Connor**

"Sharon Isbin's superbly lyrical playing endows these folksongs from the British Isles and North America with poetic beauty and enchanting intensity. The singing of Joan Baez is as sweetly evocative as ever. Mark O'Connor's superb *Strings and Threads Suite* for violin and guitar, is spectacular, offering brilliant virtuosity in a framework of authentic folk intensity." – **Graham Wade, Classical Guitar Magazine**

"Comes off spectacularly. ... knockout renditions by Baez and Isbin ... Such is the musical sympathy and understanding displayed by all three performers here that, at the risk of condoning both bigamy and the reckless use of clichés, this is a marriage made in heaven." – **Gramophone**

"One of the finest of Isbin's many fine recordings. ... simply exquisite. Her tone is ravishing." – **American Record Guide**

April 2009 Hot Pick: "Isbin's playing could not be bettered; her expressive readings are full of intense lyricism and intimate poetry. ... amazingly sophisticated arrangements." – **NET Radio Nebraska**

"With this new recording, Isbin proves she is one of the few classical musicians who can find the right grooves and native feel of Americana and English folk music. There's a vitality and excitement to this kind of American roots music that Isbin manages to capture with unwavering precision." – **Rochester Democrat & Chronicle**

"This Grammy Award-winner's latest CD is lovely collection of classical and folk pieces that shows off her virtuoso talents and delicate touch. Joan Baez provides haunting vocals." – **Film Score Monthly**

"The sounds of both instruments are beautifully captured on the recording. ... I can imagine this CD has very wide appeal, and not just among classical collectors." – **Audiophile Audition**

"*Wayfaring Stranger* joins her with Joan Baez's singing, casting a haunting spell. Throughout, the sound of Isbin's guitar is warm, with a tone both soothing and smooth. It blends with Baez's voice and O'Connor's violin like they were destined for each other." – **Vintage Guitar**

"The playing is exemplary, and the result is an ambitious, intriguing and thoroughly enjoyable album." – **PopMatters**

"The four Renaissance lute works are a lovely way to open this delightful recital. ... Joan Baez sings two folk songs with her characteristic pure tone and poignant delivery. John Duarte's *Joan Baez Suite* skillfully weaves contrapuntal passages, thematic juxtapositions, occasional dissonance, delicate harmonics, and quotation into a moving tapestry ... In *Strings and Threads Suite*, O'Connor's fluid grace and deep affection for the genre are evident in every bar and Isbin has a fine feel for the music ... A beautifully played program of instantaneous appeal. Sound is immaculate and lifelike throughout." – **Fanfare**

"Leave it to an extraordinary musician like Sharon Isbin ... definitely a keeper and a disc to return to again and again." – **All Music Guide**