

New West Guitar Group



Praised as "sharp and refined" by the Seattle Times, New West Guitar Group infuses their latest album "Big City" with their signature blend of laid-back virtuosity and expert arrangements that "sometimes verge on orchestral" (All Music Guide). The album is the group's fifth studio record and the second released on Summit Records.

"Big City" is the follow up to 2011's critically acclaimed "Round Trip Ticket" that was described by Downbeat as ; "an open--spaces, sunlight---dappled record that feels like it was recorded in plain air, with the three musicians surrounded by Redwoods." This time, New West sets out to find serenity in the midst of a thriving, frenetic metropolis. With their infectious pulse and driving rhythms, original charts like "Every Big City," "Inspiration Point," "Train Bump" and "Pacific Blues" capture the urban hustle, while the more tranquil tunes—"Mission Creek," "Proud Day's Work" and "Evergreen"—offer contemplative respite. Intricate yet faithful covers of "Everybody Wants to Rule the World" (Tears for Fears), "All I Want" (Joni Mitchell), "Bleecker Street" (Simon & Garfunkel) and "Wrapped Around Your Finger" (The Police) surface throughout the record, like favorite songs emanating from open windows and evoking wistful memories.

The Los Angeles based group currently includes Perry Smith, Jeff Stein and John Storie, who all share composing and arranging credits on the album. Firmly rooted in classic jazz, the trio's versatility as both players and composers has given them a reputation as pioneers in the realm of guitar ensemble repertoire. Acoustic Guitar has praised the group for its ability to shift seamlessly "...from chamber--like elegance and fragile introspection to exhilarating swing and gritty blues." "Big City" fully embraces this open--minded quality and showcases the group's intimate understanding of a guitar's melodic, harmonic, timbral and percussive capabilities. The sonic palette includes acoustic steel and nylon stringed instruments as well as electric guitars with ample effects, plus innovative strumming and fingerpicking techniques.

The group's previous album, "Round Trip Ticket", reached number 28 on the national jazz charts and was featured frequently on NPR's Morning Edition and All Things Considered. Since their earliest days as music students at the University of Southern California, New West has tapped into its straight-ahead jazz roots to develop a sound that embraces various shades of folk, country, rock and pop.

Over the years, New West Guitar Group has piled up numerous awards and accolades, and has enjoyed broad international exposure. Before they even left USC, they were the first group to receive the coveted Thornton Protégé Grant. During this same period, the Los Angeles Sister Cities Committee honored the group as musical ambassadors of L.A. – which in turn created the opportunity for them to perform at the 2005 World Expo in Nagoya, Japan, and the 2007 German-American Volksfest in Berlin. They have continued to perform in major venues throughout the U.S. and Canada, Europe and Asia.