



## The Lexus Leader of the Arts

January, 2004



**Juan R. Ramírez-Hernández**, violinist with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, founder of the Atlanta Virtuosi Foundation, Inc. and the Buckhead Youth Orchestra, and conductor of the Atlanta Community Symphony Orchestra, began his study of music in Mexico. At age 14, he began studying with Henryk Szeryng, and continued as Szeryng became his principal mentor in Mexico, the U.S. and Europe. He attended the New England Conservatory of Music in Boston, and played with the Boston and Pittsburgh Symphonies before he accepted a permanent position with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra.

Prior to his residence in the United States, Ramírez toured Israel, Europe, and the Orient with the Ballet Folklórico of Mexico, and was a member of the Xalapa Symphony, National University Symphony, the Opera Orchestra, and the National Symphony of Mexico.

Ramírez plays a number of instruments, including the guitar, mandolin, and marimba, and as a composer is noted for his compositions and arrangements commissioned by the Hispanic Festival of the Arts. Influenced by his native land, "Suite Huasteca" for violin, strings, and guitar, received critical acclaim both in Atlanta and in Mexico. His compositions include "Anahuac" for tenor, soprano, winds, strings, guitar, harpsichord and pre-Colombian percussion, commissioned in 1993 by the ACOG – Cultural Olympiad as part of ¡MEXICO! A Cultural Tapestry, and "Suite Criolla" for chorus, narrator and orchestra, with tenor and soprano solo, which premiered in 1995 at the Hispanic Festival of the Arts. His composition, "Navidad Hispana" for solo guitar and orchestra, was recently premiered by the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra. His first string quartet "Suite Latina" was commissioned by the Amelia Chamber Music Festival in 2001. "Suite Latina" had its world premiere in June of 2001 by members of the Amelia Chamber Music Festival in Amelia Island, Florida.

As a music advocator and educator this year Mr. Ramírez founded a new music program for young children. Under the auspices of the Atlanta Virtuosi Foundation, Inc., Music for Success! is an educational program in partnership with metro Atlanta educational institutions to encourage and support artistic creativity for young elementary and middle schools children of many backgrounds and to provide them instrumental and orchestral string training by professional musicians.

For his pursuit of excellence in music and for initiating and serving several community music organizations, Juan Ramirez exemplifies the spirit of a Lexus Leader of the Arts.