



Guitarist

Minnesota Guitar Society Mission Statement

Promote the guitar in all its stylistic and cultural diversity through sponsorship of public forums, concerts, and workshops. Serve as an educational and social link between the community and amateur and professional guitarists of all ages.

The Minnesota Guitar Society • PO Box 14986 / Minneapolis MN 55414 • Vol. 35 No. 6 / Winter Issue 2019

Warm Up Your Winter with Concerts at Sundin Music Hall



**Mak Grgić Returns!
Saturday, December 7th**

Mak Grgić first performed on our series several years ago, and we've been eager to bring him back ever since. His talent and taste as soloist, collaborator, and recording artist are fueled by curiosity, imagination, and boundless energy. His repertoire attests to his versatility and wide-ranging interests from the Baroque and Renaissance to music of the cinema, from ethnic music of his native Balkans to extreme avant-garde and microtonal music.

He averages 85 performances a year as a soloist and with many collaborators. He is a founding member of the flamenco-style "Duo Deloro" with Adam Del Monte, and the new

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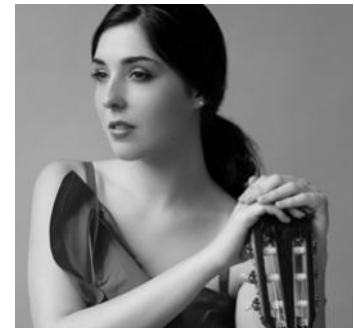
**Acoustic Guitarathon
Saturday, January 18th**

Our annual non-classical guitarathon provides a way to share the talents of locally based (and often internationally known!) artists in many styles. This year's program, curated by Ben Gateno, is rich in both virtuosity and variety.

Ben Abrahamson is a dynamic, original voice on the acoustic guitar. His compositions and fingerstyle approach blend jazz improvisation with flamenco dexterity. His passion for flamenco drove him to *Taller de Música* School of Music in Barcelona, where he studied under Juan Ramón Caro. He has composed works for the Minneapolis Guitar Quartet, Zorongo Flamenco Dance Theatre, the Mac Jazz big band, and the Muhlenberg College Theatre and Dance Department. He has shared the stage with mentors Michael and Tony Hauser, Susana di Palma, La Conja, Chuscales, Pedro Cortes Jr., Joan Griffith, and Gary Lee Joyner. This year, he released his debut album, *Neolithic*.

Adam Bjoraker is a guitarist and a singer/songwriter originally

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**Andrea González Caballero
Saturday, February 15th**

One of today's most acclaimed young guitarists, Andrea González Caballero is a star-in-the-making. She has been described by *Operaworld Magazine* as "the female voice of the Spanish guitar." She has been an award winner at numerous international guitar competitions, including First Prize and Special Prize at the XL International Competition F. Sor in Rome, and the XIII Alhambra International Guitar Competition in Valencia (Spain), at which she was the youngest guitarist to ever receive First Prize.

González Caballero has appeared at international festivals

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Upcoming Concerts At-A-Glance

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music “FretX Duo” with Daniel Lippel. As Young Artist in Residence with the Da Camera Society of Los Angeles, he founded “DC8,” an octet dedicated to contemporary music.

In 2009, Grgić made his debut in Russia, performing Rodrigo’s *Concerto de Aranjuez* with the St. Petersburg Symphony Orchestra. The following year, he toured the US as a member of the Zagreb Guitar Quartet, and also appeared at the Lancaster Festival in Ohio, performing Rodrigo’s *Fantasia para un Gentilhombre* and Boccherini’s *Introduction et Fandango*.

He has toured China, Japan, and the Balkans, and has had performances and residencies in Slovenia, Portugal, and Spain, as well as at the Sarajevo Music Academy, the Paris Guitar Foundation, the Zurich University of the Arts, the Hong Kong International Guitar Festival, and in the US, at the Austin Classical Guitar Society, the Beyond Microtonal Music Festival in Pittsburgh, the Dallas Opera, the New York Classical Guitar Society, and many more.

An active entrepreneur and educator, Grgić is director of EuroStrings, a consortium of 17 guitar festivals in Europe, the European Guitar Festival Collaborative, the Zagreb Guitar Festival, the Roots & Notes Interactive Music Festival in Croatia, and Music@Rush Hour in Los Angeles. He serves as director of Elemental Guitar in Santa Monica, a program for youth, and as an adjunct faculty member at Mount St. Mary’s University in Los Angeles.

Grgić’s recordings explore the world of guitar and its possibilities. His latest, *Balkanisms* for Naxos Music in collaboration with RTV Slovenija and *MAKrotonal* for MicroFest Records, cover ethnic, microtonal, new, and early music on re-fretted instruments such as a “zig-zag fretted Bach

prototype guitar” that capture the temperaments of the Baroque period.

Born in Ljubljana, Slovenia, in 1987, Grgić studied guitar in Zagreb with Ante Cagalj at the Elly Basic Music Academy. By age 14, he was balancing his world champion status in karate with his love for the guitar. Throughout high school, he concertized in Ljubljana and Zagreb, splitting his weeks between the two cities, while competing in professional martial arts contests across Europe and Asia. After an injury to his left thumb, he decided to focus solely on a career in music, completing a bachelor’s degree with Alvaro Pierri at the University for Music and Performing Arts in Vienna. Pursuing advanced studies in the US, Grgić was one of the first students to apply for the University of Southern California (USC) Thornton’s new Arts Leadership graduate program, which he incorporated into his doctoral studies in guitar. He has been a student of William Kanengiser and Scott Tennant of the Los Angeles Guitar Quartet, and Brian Head, artistic director of the Guitar Foundation of America. In 2017, he began the Artist Diploma program at USC, the first guitarist in their history to be admitted to this elite program.

Mak Grgić Concert Program

Sonata No. 1 for Solo Violin in G minor, BWV 1001
by J. S. Bach (1685–1750)

Toccatà by Joaquin Rodrigo (1901–99)

Three Etudes by Fernando Sor (1778–1839)

“Gabriel’s Oboe” and Theme from *The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly* by Ennio Morricone (b. 1928)

Asturias by Isaac Albeniz (1860–1909)

Intermission

Levantine Suite by Dusan Bogdanović (b. 1955)

Five Balkan Pieces by Miroslav Tadić (b. 1959)

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January Concert continued from page 1



Left to right:

(top) Ben Abrahamson, Adam Bjoraker, Tom Feldmann; (bottom) Ben Gateno, Joel Shapira, Mathias Simon.

from St. Paul. After spending his formative years on the Midwestern plains, Adam decided to bring what he'd learned in the Finger-Style Guitar program at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee back to Minnesota. He has been reconnecting with his hometown and immersing himself in the strong music and art scenes here, composing both instrumental and sung music under the moniker St. Anthony Mann. Adam plays guitars made by Dave Livermore in Forest Lake.

Minnesota native **Tom Feldmann** has been heralded as one of the premier acoustic guitar players specializing in bottleneck slide and prewar country blues. Tom taught himself to play guitar at age 17, spending untold hours dissecting original recordings by everyone from Charley Patton to Skip James, Bukka White to—of course—Robert Johnson. His mastery of that style has aligned him with the who's who in acoustic music, working alongside Jorma Kaukonen at Kaukonen's famous Fur Peace Ranch, making numerous instructional videos for Stefan Grossman's Guitar Workshop, and contributing articles to *Acoustic Guitar* and *Vintage Guitar*. Tom has released 12 studio albums. His latest is *Dyed in the Wool*.

A native of southern Minnesota, guitarist **Ben Gateno** earned master's and doctoral degrees in classical guitar performance from the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, NY. Following graduate school, Ben studied for one year with renowned teacher and performer Antignoni Goni in Brussels, Belgium. After his return to the US, Ben spent five years performing extensively as a member of the Minneapolis Guitar Quartet. With the MGQ, Ben was featured on public radio and television stations

throughout the US, as well as on the nationally broadcast radio program *Performance Today*. Ben also appears on the MGQ's 2014 release *Thrum*, a well-received album of commissioned music released on the Innova label. An extremely versatile musician, Ben enjoys presenting solo guitar programs that feature a wide range of styles and genres, with a special emphasis on classical, country blues, and ragtime. He now lives in Rochester, MN, where he maintains a busy private teaching schedule.

Joel Shapira is an internationally acclaimed guitarist who lives in St. Paul. He's a leader and/or member of many top Twin Cities jazz ensembles, as well as a master of the demanding discipline of solo guitar. He performs regularly with world-class musicians, has over a dozen recordings to his credit, and is an artist featured on the NYC record label Unseen Rain Records. In 2017, with the release of his first solo guitar recording, *In Essence*, Shapira received glowing reviews from critics in *Vintage Guitar* magazine, the *Jazz Police* website, and the *Villager* newspaper, as well as jazz writer Andrea Canter and listeners to KBEM Jazz/88.5FM, which has given the recording extensive airplay.

Mathias Simon grew up playing many instruments (violin, saxophone, bassoon) and has found a great interest and challenge in learning fingerstyle guitar. He has been playing guitar for 8 years and studies with Ben Woolman. Mathias loves the variety in this genre of guitar music. He recently participated in the Wilson Center Guitar Festival in Wisconsin and made it to the semi-final round of this nationally known competition. He describes that as "a wonderful learning experience."

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and concert series around the world. Highlights include performances at Palau de la Música in Barcelona, the National Auditorium and Juan March Foundation in Madrid, and Sinfonietta Ratingen and Neue Philharmonie Westfalen in Germany. Selected by the International Guitar Foundation of London to perform as soloist in international music events such as the London Guitar Festival, she debuted in the UK with concerts at such venues as King's Cross in London and Sage Gateshead in Newcastle.

Her 2017 CD for the prestigious Laureate Series on the internationally known Naxos label contains both the premieres of new guitar compositions and standard pieces of the classical guitar repertoire by master composers such as Benjamin Britten, Isaac Albéniz, and Francisco Tárrega. The recording was received with glowing reviews and great acclaim: "This album is a delicate, elegant and majestic musical word" (Golden Melomano distinction by *Melomano Magazine*).

Her career has been supported by the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, DAAD (German Academic Exchange Service), AIE (Society of Performing Artists of Spain) and the Provincial Council of Guipúcoa to study at the Robert Schumann Hochschule in Düsseldorf (Germany), where she graduated with honors. She is currently enrolled in the graduate program at the Peabody Institute of Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, as a student of Manuel Barrueco.

Sundin Music Hall Concerts

All concerts start at 7:30 pm.

Tickets can be purchased in advance at Cadenza Music in St. Paul, or through our website <www.mnguitar.org>, or by calling our reservation line: 612-677-1111.

Box office opens at 7:00 pm.

Free parking for all Sundin Music Hall concerts is available in the lot 1/2 block east of the Hall, and in Lot E (southeast corner of the campus, 2 blocks from Sundin).

Visit Hamline University website for campus map:

<www.hamline.edu/directions>

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Andrea González Caballero Program

Rondeña by Regino Sáinz de la Maza (1896–1981)

Preludios de Primavera: Homenaje a Francisco Tárrega

by Joaquín Clerch (b. 1965)

- I. Primavera II. Las olas de Moncofa
- III. Homenaje a Tchaikovsky IV. El Adiós
- V. Y si pienso en la Habana VI. Souvenir de Granada
- VII. Cuando tú no estás

Tres piezas españolas by Joaquín Rodrigo (1901–99)

- I. Fandango II. Passacaglia III. Zapateado

Intermission

Introduction and Variations on a Theme by Mozart, Op.9

by Fernando Sor (1787–1839)

Nocturnal after John Dowland:

Reflections on "Come, heavy sleep," Op.70

by Benjamin Britten (1913–76)

Four Movements from *Suite Española, Op.47*

by Isaac Albéniz (1860–1909)

Cádiz Asturias Cataluña Sevilla



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Warm Thoughts for a Cold Season

Dear Friends,

I write this on a sub-freezing morning in early November. All-too-brief autumn is past. Winter is here. What better time to tune up the guitar, play some music, and buy a ticket or two (or more) to an upcoming MGS concert? We're in the middle of another wonderful season of concerts. We're also nearing the end of the calendar (and the MGS financial) year. Time to take a look at where we stand. Time to say thanks.

We thank you, our members, for your ongoing support of our concerts and our Guitar In Our Schools (GIOS) program, and we thank our advertisers, whose support makes possible production of our newsletter. We thank the Augustine Foundation and the Metropolitan Regional Arts Council (MRAC) for grant support.

Memberships. We stood at an all-time low of 134 a year ago, and are now at 174. Our goal by the end of the year is 180. Tell a friend, neighbor, colleague at work, or student (if you teach) about the MGS. We don't offer much in the way of snazzy member benefits but we do provide a unique and valuable service to the greater community of guitar lovers. Memberships are what keep us strong. When it's time to renew your membership, please consider the monthly-payment option now available through our website.

Grant support. In addition to the two grants we received this past year, we now have (as this goes to press) three pending for 2020, a grant application in preparation for a February deadline, and research underway to find more sources of funding support. The guidelines for some funders have evolved, and the MGS, like every arts organization in Minnesota, needs to evolve in response.

A year ago, we faced a budget shortfall and were carrying a debt from the previous season. As this year draws to a close, we are debt-free and have a small operating cash reserve. But to ensure a strong remainder of our concert season, and a successful second year of the GIOS program, we need your help.

Come to concerts. Buy tickets for friends. Consider a year-end gift. Consider volunteering.

Our current Treasurer's term is coming to an end. He wants to transition to other much-needed tasks on the board. We need someone with bookkeeping skills (and experience), or an aptitude for numbers and a willingness to learn. Two other board members' terms will also end next year. We need new members with enthusiasm for our mission and time to help with community outreach and publicity. If that sounds like you, please get in touch. I'll buy the coffee. We'll talk about how much fun you'll have helping the MGS. Every donation matters. Every membership matters. Thanks, again. See you at Sundin!

—Paul Hintz / Email: <mgdir@mnguitar.org>

Q.

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Vladislav Bláha Concert on January 26

by Beatrice Flaming

The Czech and Slovak Cultural Center of Minnesota, and Sokol Minnesota (with promotional assistance from the Minnesota Guitar Society) will present a concert by Vladislav Bláha on Sunday, January 26th at 2:00 PM. The concert will take place on the second floor of the C. S. P. S. Hall at 383 Michigan St. in St. Paul (on the corner of W. 7th St).

Bláha studied at the Brno Conservatoire and the Franz Liszt University of Music in Weimar, Germany, and received a Doctor of Arts degree from the Academy of Music in Bratislava, Slovakia. He also earned the title “docent of guitar” from the Janacek Academy of Music in Brno, Czech Republic, where he currently teaches. He is professor of guitar at Conservatoire of Brno, president of the Czech Classical Guitar Society, and chair of the International Guitar Festival and Courses in Brno.

Twenty-seven composers from 16 countries have dedicated works to him, including Nikita Koshkin, Jorge Morel, and John W. Duarte. He has performed the world premieres of works by such important composers as Leo Brouwer, Štěpán Rak, and Václav Kučera.

Music Opinion Magazine in England described Bláha as one of the finest Czech guitarists. He is the only Czech guitarist to have given recitals at both Carnegie Hall in

New York and the Royal Festival Hall in England. Bláha has given concerts in prestigious halls in 45 different countries across Europe, Asia, and Latin America, as well as in the US. He is the winner of four international guitar competitions—Volos (Greece), Esztergom (Hungary), Kutna Hora (Czech Republic), and Markneukirchen

(Germany)—and he received the “Nedale Bronze” in the Radio France Competition in Paris.

He has recorded 7 solo CDs, and another 6 CDs as a soloist with other musicians, along with radio and television recordings in several countries. Many videos of Bláha performing may be found online.

His program on January 26th includes two pieces dedicated to him by their composers (Jorge Morel and Nikita Koshkin), as well as works by J. S. Bach, John Duarte, Antonio Carlos Jobim, Manuel de Falla, and Štěpán Rak.

Please join us for an afternoon of fine guitar music. For more information about tickets, and the concert, please contact Beatrice Flaming at <beaflaming@gmail.com>.



Schubert Club Competition

The Schubert Club Bruce P. Carlson Student Scholarship Competition, held each spring, awards a total of over \$50,000 annually to young musicians.

The Competition has been (re)named in memory of Bruce P. Carlson, who was Executive Director of the Schubert Club from 1968 to 2006. It began in 1922 as a celebration of the 40th anniversary of The Schubert Club, and started modestly with three winners representing the categories of voice, violin, and piano. Over the years it has grown to 14 different categories, including guitar, with two cash prizes (\$1,500 and \$2,000) awarded in each category. All prizes are to be used for further musical education. The winners in each category are invited to perform in the annual Winners’ Recital.

Applicants must be a resident of or enrolled in a learning institution within the 5-state region of Minnesota, Wisconsin, North and South Dakota, and Iowa. The application deadline for next year’s Competition is January 24, 2020. The recital will be on March 28 at the Ordway in St. Paul. For more information, visit <www.schubert.org/competition>.

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These continue to be challenging times for all arts organizations, large and small, old and new. One of the challenges every arts organization faces is building the next generation of audience members. For us, another challenge is nurturing the next generation of guitar players. *Guitar In Our Schools* (GIOS) is the Minnesota Guitar Society's program dedicated to meeting both of those challenges.

In this program, now beginning its second year, we partner with music and guitar teachers in schools throughout the Greater Twin Cities in four ways:

Providing masterclass and/or informal concert visits by guitarists from our Sundin Music Hall series.

Establishing and promoting guitar classes and programs through curriculum and other material support as well as teaching-assistant visits by locally based guitarists.

Providing performance opportunities for student soloists and ensembles.

Encouraging first-time concert-goers to attend our Sundin series by offering special-discount ticket vouchers to students (and their families) at partnering schools.

Although *Guitar In Our Schools* is a new program for us, it is modeled on the successful programs of guitar societies in Austin (TX), Cleveland, and St. Louis, and is rooted in our history of providing masterclasses and workshops in the schools and in the community.

This school year, we are working closely with the guitar program at Southwest High School in Minneapolis, built by its Director of Guitar Education, Ruth LeMay. In addition, we have begun to partner with Roosevelt High School in Minneapolis. Visits to those schools and others by all the Sundin Music Hall concert artists are scheduled.

As this issue of our newsletter goes to press, we are waiting for word on two grant proposals to continue funding GIOS for all of 2020. Additional sources of funding are being researched, as we plan to add more school partnerships, more artist visits, and more teaching assistants. Look for updates in future issues of the newsletter and on the MGS website page devoted to GIOS.

For this program, as for our concert series, our most important source of support will always be the generosity of MGS members and friends. Please consider a year-end donation, and earmark it for the GIOS program if desired.

Or donate like-new, gently used guitar accessories, sheet music, or CDs. Bring those items to a Sundin concert, and we'll add them to the stock on the MGS Store table in the lobby. While you're there, you might be tempted to buy (back?) an item or two!

And of course we can always use more guitars. You could consider donating that second-best, still-playable-and-tunable-but-no-longer-loved instrument. Please contact me at <mgdir@mnguitar.org> for more information.

—Paul Hintz



Our September Sundin Music Hall concert artists, the Levante Guitar Duo (Aleksandra and Vojislav Ivanovic), answer questions from the students of the Guitar Orchestra class at Southwest High School (left) and face the camera with the students and their teacher, the Director of Guitar Education at Southwest, Ruth LeMay (below).



Thanks to all our friends and members for their continuing support of the Guitar In Our Schools program, especially the Augustine Foundation.



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ALL THINGS FLAMENCO! Ongoing Sunday morning group technique class (for 20 years now), private instruction, performances, guitars from Spain. My book, *Love, Magick, and the Flamenco Guitar*, will be out soon! Contact Scott Mateo Davies 612-749-2662 (<www.scottmateo.com>).

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The Minnesota Guitar Society

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