

## ***PRESS RELEASE***

***EuroStrings – the European Guitar Festival Collaborative***

is pleased to announce

**6th Guimarões International Guitar Festival (FIGG)**

**21–29 December 2019**

**in Guimarões, Portugal**

will feature *SIX* EuroStrings Artists:

**Maja Kralj**, Slovenia  
**Cassie Martin**, France  
**Pablo Menéndez**, Spain  
**Bruno Pino Mateos**, Spain  
**Pavel Ralev**, Bulgaria

and  
**Mateusz Kowalski**, Poland  
*winner of the*  
**2019 Second EuroStrings Guitar Competition**

### ***Concerts***

**Thursday 26 December 2019**

**Cassie Martin**

Palace of the Duques de Bragança, 18.00, free entry

**Pablo Menéndez**

Palace of the Duques de Bragança, 18.40, free entry

**Saturday 28 December 2019**

**Mateusz Kowalski**

at Conservatório de Guimarões, 17.00

**Sunday 29 December 2019**

**Pavel Ralev**

at Conservatório de Guimarões, 15.00, free entry

**Maja Kralj**

at Conservatório de Guimarões, 15.40, free entry

**Bruno Pino Mateos**

at Conservatório de Guimarões, 18.00, free entry

### ***Masterclasses***

**Friday 27 December 2019**

**Mateusz Kowalski and Bruno Pino Mateos**

Vila Flor Cultural Centre, 9.30–17.00

**Saturday 28 December 2019**

**Mateusz Kowalski and Bruno Pino Mateos**

Vila Flor Cultural Centre, 9.30–17.00

“GUITAR FOR ALL”, workshop with EuroStrings  
Artists for young children who have never played  
guitar before, 10.00–12.00

**Sunday 29 December 2019**

**Mateusz Kowalski**

Vila Flor Cultural Centre, 9.30–17.00

**Bruno Pino Mateos, Maja Kralj, Cassie Martin,**

**Pavel Ralev and Pablo Menéndez**

Vila Flor Cultural Centre, 10.00–13.00

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### About the EuroStrings Artists

EuroStrings Artists are a group of young professional guitarists, who are the laureates of the international competitions organised by the 17 EuroStrings Platform member guitar festivals. They are invited to take part in the year-long carefully curated EuroStrings Exchange Programme, which is delivered through the EuroStrings Curriculum.

**Mateusz Kowalski** has been winning prizes in international guitar competitions over the past few years. He recorded his debut CD in 2018 with the Polish label CD Accord, distributed by NAXOS. He is also a scholarship winner of the Polish KFnRD and Ministry of Culture and National Heritage programme “Young Poland”. He won First Prize in the 2nd EuroStrings Guitar Competition in July 2019.

**Maja Kralj** was born in 1999 and started playing guitar at the age of seven at the elementary music school Sežana with Nataša Črnugelj. She continued her education at the Conservatory for Music and Ballet in Ljubljana, studying with Anton Črnugelj. Maja won First Prize at the Zagreb International Guitar Competition in 2017 and First Prize at the Uppsala International Guitar Festival in 2019. She now studies at the Academy of Music Ljubljana with Andrej Grafenauer.

**Cassie Martin** started playing the guitar at the age of five. By the age of nine, she started to win prizes in competitions. More recently, she won First Prize at: the International Guitar Competition in Béarn, at the Roland Dyens-Révélation International Competition *Classical Guitar Magazine* in 2018, and at the International Competition in Carry-le-Rouet. Presently, she divides her time between the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique et de Dance in Paris, where she studies with Olivier Chassain, and performing, which is her absolute pleasure, with repertoire ranging from early to contemporary music.

**Bruno Pino Mateos** was born in Salamanca in 1997. He studied at the Conservatorio Superior de Música in Salamanca, and then he continued his studies at the Conservatorio Superior de Castilla y León. Bruno Pino Mateos has performed at the Teatro Liceo de

Salamanca and at the festivals of Coria, Amarante and Petrer. Among his numerous awards, he received First Prize at: the V International Guitar Festival of Guimarães 2018; the International Guitar Festival José Tomás Villa de Petrer Competition in the Youth category; the XIX International Guitar Competition Ciudad de Coria in the youth category; and the II Alhambra International Guitar Competition for Young People, Valencia.

**Pablo Menéndez** was born in 1992 in Asturias, Spain, and started playing guitar at the age of ten. He completed his Bachelor’s degree with Marco Socías in San Sebastian, and obtained his Masters ‘cum laude’ after studying with Carlo Marchione at the Conservatorium Maastricht in the Netherlands. He also studies orchestral conducting. He has been a prizewinner in several international music competitions and has given solo concerts in Spain, Germany, the Netherlands and Italy. He recorded a CD of nineteenth-century Spanish music with tenor Joaquín Pixán and pianist Mario Bernardo. Pablo currently combines his concert activity with teaching at the Conservatorio Nacional Superior de Música in Córdoba, Spain.

**Pavel Ralev** is a Bulgarian guitarist based in London. Shortly after his first guitar lessons at age twelve, Pavel began studying at the National School of Music and Dance Arts ‘Dobrin Petkov’ in Plovdiv, Bulgaria, studying with Milena and Valentin Valtchev. He studied with Michael Lewin at the Royal Academy of Music, London on a full scholarship and is currently studying towards a Masters at the University of Surrey with guitarist-composer Professor Stephen Goss. In addition to his solo activities, he is a founding member of the Metropolitan Guitar Quartet, together with his friends Michael Butten, Giacomo Susani and Emmanuel Sowicz. They made their public debut in October 2019.

For full **EuroStrings Artists profiles**, visit: <https://eurostrings.eu/young-stars/eurostrings-artists-of-2019-2020/>

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### EuroStrings Scholarship

EuroStrings offers the opportunity for a young guitarist of modest means to attend one of the **17 EuroStrings festivals**, where in addition to attending concerts, they participate in workshops, masterclasses and outreach activities. The **EuroStrings Scholarship** to attend the **6th Guimarães International Guitar Festival 2019** has been awarded to the young Italian guitarist **Elia Portarena**.

**EuroStrings** is proud to be a part of the 6th Guimarães International Guitar Festival from 21–29 December 2019. EuroStrings is a **platform of European guitar festivals**, led by Zagreb Guitar Festival. As the **first such platform** to be established, it is ever expanding: having started with an initial 14 member festivals in 2018, it now has **17 member festivals in 2020**. The project is co-funded by the Creative Europe programme of the European Union and is the first guitar project ever to receive such funding. EuroStrings also has **partners in America and China**, making it a truly **global project**.

The featured artists at the **6th Guimarães International Guitar Festival 2019** are:

- classical guitarist **Francisco Luís** (Thursday 26 December, 16.00, Conservatório de Guimarães)
- classical guitarist **Aniello Desiderio** (Friday 27 December, 21.00, Vila Flor Cultural Centre)
- Conference – “Portuguese Contemporary Music for Guitar” with **Luis Leite and José Teixeira** (Saturday 28 October 2019, 14.00, Palácio Vila Flor)
- flamenco guitarist **David Carmona’s quintet** (Sunday 29 December, 21.30, Vila Flor Cultural Centre)
- masterclasses by Aniello Desiderio and Dejan Ivanovich, (27–29 December, Vila Flor Cultural Centre, 9.30–17.00)

For the **complete programme**, please visit <https://figg.pt/en/>

### About Guimarães International Guitar Competition

The **6th “Cidade de Guimarães” International Guitar Competition (Junior)** will be held on Saturday 21 December 2019 from 9.00–17.00 at the Vila Flor Cultural Centre. The **“Cidade de Guimarães” International Guitar Competition (Senior)** will be held on Friday 27 December 2019 from 9.00–18.00 with the Final round on Saturday 28 December 2019 at 21.00 followed by the Award Ceremony at 22.30 at the Vila Flor Cultural Centre.

## Contact

### Guimarães International Guitar Festival

Sociedade Musical de Guimarães  
Largo Condessa do Juncal  
4810–083, Guimarães  
website: <https://figg.pt/pt/programa2019/>

### Interviews

Artistic Director, Nuno Cachada  
Tel. +351 96 950 80 75  
email: [2019@figg.pt](mailto:2019@figg.pt)

### EuroStrings

Artistic Director: Mak Grgić, email:  
[mak@eurostrings.eu](mailto:mak@eurostrings.eu)  
PR Queries: Larisa Lieberman, email:  
[internationalpr@eurostrings.eu](mailto:internationalpr@eurostrings.eu)  
Comms Queries, email:  
[communication@eurostrings.eu](mailto:communication@eurostrings.eu)  
Website: <https://eurostrings.eu>

For more information and photographs, please contact:

**Larisa Lieberman**  
email: [internationalpr@eurostrings.eu](mailto:internationalpr@eurostrings.eu)

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