

PRESS RELEASE

EuroStrings – the European Guitar Festival Collaborative

is pleased to announce the

NIKŠIĆ GUITAR FESTIVAL 2021

20–24 September 2021

featuring

EuroStrings Artists

Marcin Kuźniar, Poland

Marcell Nickmann, Hungary

Concerts

Marcin Kuźniar with the **Montenegrin Symphony Orchestra**, conducted by **Iker Sanchez Silva**
playing the *Concierto de Aranjuez* by **Joaquín Rodrigo**

– Nikšić Theater, [Monday 20 September 2021, 20.00](#)

Marcell Nickmann

– Hall of the Music School, [Wednesday 22 September 2021, 20.00](#)

Masterclasses

The Brazilian guitarist **Yamandu Costa** will give a lecture to the **EuroStrings Artists**
which will later be streamed and available to all EuroStrings Artists

Marcin Kuźniar has already done outreach activities in Tivat during the Montenegro International Guitar Competition, where he also gave a concert, and was a member of the jury.

Marcell Nickmann will give a masterclass to the students from the Music school Dara Čokorilo

Yamandu Costa will also give a concert – [Tuesday 21 September 2021, 20.00](#)

**NB: The audience will be able to attend the concerts only if they meet one of the conditions
from the National Digital COVID certificate.**

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About EuroStrings

EuroStrings is the first platform of European guitar festivals, led by Zagreb Guitar Festival and ever expanding with an initial 14 member festivals in 2018 and reaching 17 member festivals in 2021; with three Associate Festivals also added in 2021 as well as Affiliate Partners around the world, including the Americas and China, making it a truly global project. 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. Each member festival also stages an international guitar competition.

EuroStrings website: <https://eurostrings.eu>

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 members' guitar festivals. They are invited to take part in the EuroStrings Exchange Programme, which is delivered through the EuroStrings Curriculum. The EuroStrings Exchange Programme was created for EuroStrings Artists to help them to develop professional careers as classical guitarists.

Marcin Kuźniar Marcin Kuźniar was born in Krakow, Poland, in 1992. He started studying the guitar at the age of six with Adam Makowski and, later, with Włodzimierz Lerner. During his university years, he worked with Alina Gruszką, Marcin Dylla and Paolo Pegoraro. By age 20, he had performed the *Concierto de Aranjuez* and *Fantasia para un Gentilhombre* by Joaquín Rodrigo, and *Concerto* by Heitor Villa-Lobos – all with orchestra; and later also *Concerto del Sur* by Manuel María Ponce and *Guitar Concerto*, Op. 36 by Mauro Giuliani. By 25, he had won prizes in about 40 guitar competitions, such as Grand Prize at Ex-Aequo International Classical Guitar Competition, New York, in 2020, Special Prize for the Best Interpretation of Contemporary Music at Forum Gitarre, Vienna, in 2019.

Marcin Kuźniar has a strong interest in performing the works of contemporary composers not often heard in guitar recitals, such as Tristram Cary and Tristan Murail. His debut CD of 2018, *Song Without Words*, includes works by Richard Rodney Bennett, Alan Rawsthorne and György Ligeti complemented with a transcription of *Moments Musicaux* by Schubert (rarely performed on guitar), and music by Mertz and Tárrega/Arcas. During 2020, he released videos of *Escarraman* by Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco and *Variations on a Theme of Debussy* by Tilman Hoppstock, and began to transcribe music by Polish composers Penderecki, Weinberg, Szymanowski and Lutosławski.

Marcell Nickmann was born in Budapest, Hungary and started playing the classical guitar at 14 with his first teacher, Sándor Árok. He quickly achieved success in regional and national competitions, winning several first prizes, which offered opportunities such as performing with the Austro-Hungarian Haydn Chamber Orchestra in their matinée series. In 2016, he began studying with Andrea Bozóki at the Music Faculty of University of Szeged. Since 2018, he has been working with Dávid Pavlovits. In 2019, after finishing his Bachelor degree, Marcell Nickmann won Third Prize in the Tallinn International Guitar Competition and Second Prize in the Harmonia Cordis International Guitar Competition.

In February 2019, he premiered Claude Vivier's *Pour guitare* in Hungary, and with his duo partner, the guitarist Dóra Cserenyec, they premiered *Salita in discesa* – a microtonal work written for them by the electro-acoustic composer Ákos Nagy. In 2020, as well as continuing to premiere pieces in Hungary with Dóra Cserenyec, and performing Karlheinz Stockhausen's *Tierkreis*, he began to focus on early music, recently transcribing the works of the French Baroque composer Louis Couperin. In October 2020, Marcell Nickmann won First Prize in the Szeged International Guitar Competition.

For full EuroStrings Artists profiles, visit: <https://eurostrings.eu/young-stars/eurostrings-artists-of-2020-2021/>

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EuroStrings Scholarship

To help young people of modest means study the guitar in an international context, EuroStrings has developed an annual scholarship programme for young guitar students. Every EuroStrings platform festival gives one scholarship. The scholarship includes entry to all festival concerts, lectures and masterclasses as well as participation in the festival's international competition. The EuroStrings Scholarship to attend the **Nikšić Guitar Festival** has been awarded to the young guitarist **Belmin Okanović**.

Belmin Okanović was born in 1997 and started the guitar at the age of eight. He completed the primary and secondary music school in his native city of Tuzla, in the class of a renowned professor Predrag Stanković. Belmin Okanovic has been awarded more than twenty federal and international awards from prestigious guitar competitions in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Croatia, Montenegro, Romania, Belgium and Germany. He has also won recognition at the cantonal and federal level of Bosnia and Herzegovina; among them, he is especially proud of the Recognition by the FBiH Ministry of Science and Culture. In June 2017, Belmin was admitted to the Robert Schumann School in Dusseldorf, studying with Joaquin Clerch. In 2019, Belmin was also selected as a solo player of the Yehudi Menuhin Foundation to play concerts over the next three years in the Nordrhein-Westfalen region of Germany. He plays on a guitar by Paco Santiago Marin from Spain.

About the Nikšić Guitar Festival 2021

Over the past 16 years, it has established itself as a significant artistically professional and international event, which aims to promote the highest achievements in contemporary performance of classical guitarists. The Montenegro International Guitar Competition was founded in 2006 under the auspices of the Nikšić Guitar Festival and the patronage of the Nikšić Municipality. Due to its rich prize pool, the competition has been recognised as an important point in the career development of young classical guitarists. The winners and award-winning participants of the previous competition editions have come from all over the world, and today they have become the leading guitarists of the younger generation. Until recently, Montenegro International Guitar Competition was the only professional competition for classical music in Montenegro, and one of the few in the world which has been broadcast live: by RTV Atlas up until 2016, and then by National Television RTCG since 2017. The festival is realised by the NGO Anagastum Guitar Society, with the support of the Music Center of Montenegro, the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports of Montenegro, the Municipality of Nikšić and the Public Institution Nikšić Theater. The Nikšić Guitar Festival with the International Guitar Competition in Tivat is part of the EuroStrings. As of this year, Nikšić Guitar Festival has also become a 'green festival', which means that it harmonizes its existence with the principles of environmental protection.

The Nikšić Guitar Festival closes with a concert by Božo Vrećo, a well-known performer, author and composer of *sevdalinka* from Bosnia and Herzegovina, at the Nikšić Theater on 24 September 2021, at 20.00.

For the **complete programme** of the **Nikšić Guitar Festival 2021**: <http://guitar Montenegro.com/en/>

Contact

Montenegro International Guitar Competition

Website: <http://guitar Montenegro.com>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/MIGCOnline/>

Instagram:

www.instagram.com/competition Montenegro/

Email: migc.pr@yahoo.com

Tel. +382 68 277 562

EuroStrings

Executive Director: **Ružica Gelo Ciglenečki**

Comms Queries: **Dunja Stanković**:

communication@eurostrings.eu

PR Queries: **Larisa Lieberman**:

internationalpr@eurostrings.eu

EuroStrings Contact: **info@eurostrings.eu**

Website: <https://eurostrings.eu>

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