

PRESS RELEASE

EuroStrings – the European Guitar Festival Collaborative

is pleased to announce

GUITART FESTIVAL PLOVDIV 2020

29 October–1 November 2020

featuring

SIX EuroStrings Artists:

Nino D’Amico, Italy
Maja Kralj, Slovenia
Luis Alejandro García, Spain

Cassie Martin, France
Flavio Nati, Italy
Pavel Ralev, Bulgaria

and

Mateusz Kowalski, Poland

winner of the

2019 Second EuroStrings Guitar Competition

As part of winning First Prize, **Mateusz Kowalski** has since embarked on an international concert tour in Europe, America and Asia, where he is being received with critical acclaim. *Classical Guitar Magazine* describes him as a ‘spectacular’ musician with ‘truly breathtaking’ interpretations. Mateusz Kowalski has been winning prizes in international guitar competitions over the past few years and is now emerging as a star on the international concert platform.

Born in Koszalin, Poland in 1995, Mateusz started learning guitar at the age of seven. He went on to study with Ryszard Bałauszko at the Fryderyk Chopin University of Music in Warsaw, where he graduated with honours. Since October 2019, he has been teaching at The Frederic Chopin University of Music in Warsaw. He was awarded a scholarship winner by the Polish KFnRD and Ministry of Culture and National Heritage programme ‘Young Poland’. Mateusz recorded his debut CD, *Mateusz Kowalski Classical Guitarist*, in 2018 with the Polish label CD Accord, distributed by NAXOS.

Concerts

Pavel Ralev – Winner of the GuitArt 2019 Competition – Sunday 25 October 2020, 19.00 GuitArt Facebook Page

Mateusz Kowalski – Sunday 25 October 2020, 19.30 [online](#) GuitArt Facebook Page

Nino D’Amico, Luis Alejandro García, Maja Kralj, Cassie Martin and Flavio Nati [online](#) GuitArt Facebook Page
– Wednesday 28 October 2020, 17.00

Classes and Masterclasses

Pavel Ralev gives an educational presentation of the classical guitar at the ‘Divisi’ Music Centre for Children
– Tuesday 27 October 2020, 10.00

EuroStrings Artists give online masterclasses with children from the High Music School in Plovdiv and the Academy
– Wednesday 28 October 2020, 10.00

Masterclasses by Anabel Montesinos for the EuroStrings Artists [online](#) GuitArt Facebook
– Thursday 29 October 2020, 10.00

Press Release 1/3



PRESS RELEASE

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.

Nino D'Amico was born in Naples in 1997. He began studying classical guitar at the age of 12 with his father, and then with Marco Caiazza preparing for entry to the Conservatorio di San Pietro a Majella in Naples, where he studied with Vincenzo Amabile. Since 2014, he has been giving concerts and also winning prizes in national and international guitar competitions. In May 2019, Nino won First Prize in the International Guitar Competition and the Special Prize at the International Paganini Guitar Festival competition in Parma for the Best Interpretation of a piece by Paganini (in a category with no age limit).

Luis Alejandro García, who was born in Tenerife in 1993, has won more than 20 national and international awards. He won First Prize at: the Concurso del XXIII Festival Internacional de Guitarra de Coria, Spain in 2019, 47th Concurso Internacional de Guitarra Fernando Sor in Madrid in 2019 and the 'Miquel Llobet' Certamen Internacional de Guitarra in Barcelona in 2017, among many others. In 2018, he released his first CD, *Lazos sobre el Atlántico* (JSM Guitar Records). He is a member of Canary Guitar Quartet, who have released their first recording, called *21*. In October 2019, he made his debut as a soloist at the Palau de la Música Catalana in Barcelona and will perform with the National Radio and Television Orchestra of Spain (ORTVE) at the Teatro Monumental, in April 2020.

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 has participated in masterclasses with Judicaël Perroy, Andrea De Vitis, Paolo Pegoraro, Alvaro Pierri, Xuefei Yang, among many others. 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 Danse in Paris, where she studies with Olivier Chassain, and performing, which is her absolute pleasure, with repertoire ranging from early to contemporary music.

Flavio Nati graduated with honours from the Conservatorio Santa Cecilia in his hometown, Rome, where he studied with Arturo Tallini. He gained his Masters in classical guitar performance, with Carlo Marchione at the Conservatorium Maastricht, the Netherlands, a Masters in the Interpretation of Contemporary Music from the Conservatorio Santa Cecilia and in Guitar Performance from Conservatorio di Musica Arrigo Boito in Parma. He regularly gives concerts and since 2013, Flavio has been a member of the guitar octet Supernova, an ensemble, directed by Arturo Tallini. In 2018, he won the Respighi Prize offering him the opportunity to play as a soloist with the New York Chamber Orchestra in 2019/2020 season, in the Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall.

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/>

Press Release 2/3



PRESS RELEASE

EuroStrings is proud to be a part of the **Plovdiv GuitArt Festival** from 29 October–1 November 2020. 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**.

About Plovdiv GuitArt Festival

The GuitArt Festival is an event driven by the passion of the local musical community for the guitar and its ability to unite professional musicians and amateurs from diverse cultural backgrounds. As one of the most popular and widely played musical instruments, the guitar is celebrated in all its facets.

The festival aims to be an educational and social platform for the development of Bulgarian musical talent, and to underscore the place of the guitar in the history and development of modern music across the globe. By organising workshops with local and world-renowned guitarists and educators, panel discussions with popular local musicians, an expo of Bulgarian guitar manufacturers and musical instrument importers, free lessons, showcases, film screenings and children's activities, the festival immerses its visitors in the world of the guitar in all its colours.

- Online concert by **Anabel Montesinos**, Live broadcast at Muppet Theater, Plovdiv (Thursday, 29 October 2020, 19.00)
- Guitar Masters 2020: a concert by **Veselin Koychev and Friends** – Muppet Theater, Plovdiv (Friday, 30 October 2020, 19.00)
- Concert by **Tango Cats** – Bee Bop Café (Friday, 30 October 2020, 22.00)
- Online masterclasses with **Marco Tamayo** (Saturday, 31 October 2020, 10.00)
- Concert by **Hot Club de Plovdiv** – Bee Bop Café (Saturday, 31 October 2020, 22.00)
- Lecture by Belgian production and artist manager **Tim Gubel** on 'Managing Yourself as an Artist: Facing the Challenges of Today's Market' – (Sunday, 1 November 2020, 16.00)

For the **complete programme**, please visit <https://guitart.bg/en/plovdiv2020/guitart-2020-program>

About International Classical Guitar Competition 'GuitArt' Plovdiv 2020

The Competition Final will be held on Sunday, 1 November 2020 from 10am–2pm, streamed on Facebook and guitart.bg. The competition is open for guitarist from all over the world from 18–35 years of age on the 31 December 2020.

Contact

For more information about **Plovdiv GuitArt Festival**
website: www.guitart.bg

Interviews

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EuroStrings

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Press Release 3/3

