

Mak Grgić

Guitar

Touted as a “gifted guitarist” by the *New York Times*, 2-time Grammy-nominated artist Mak Grgić [GER-gich] is a star on the worldwide stage. An expansive and adventurous repertoire attests to his versatility and wide-ranging interests. From the ethnic music of his native Balkans to extreme avant-garde and microtonal music, his roles as soloist, collaborator, and Grammy-nominated recording artist are fueled by curiosity, imagination, and boundless energy. As a testament to his versatility and wide-ranging appeal, in 2018 Mak was invited by legendary singer-songwriter k.d. lang to perform as the opening act for the North American leg of her *Ingénue Redux* Tour.

An avid new music proponent, Mak has commissioned a multitude of new works for solo guitar and guitar with ensemble. Some of these include works by Michael Gordon, Julia Adolphe, Nina Senk, Leon First and Cengiz Eren, to name a few. In the Fall of 2022 he premiered and toured a newly commissioned guitar concerto by Michael Abels, Pulitzer Prize winner and composer for the Oscar-winning motion picture *Get Out*.

As both soloist and collaborator, Mak averages eighty-five performances a year — nearly two bookings per week. Recent engagements include performances and residencies at the Musikverein and the Konzerthaus in Vienna; the Konzerthuset in Stockholm several venues in Portugal; Teatro Cervantes de Bejar in Castilla-Leon/Spain; the Sarajevo Music Academy; several venues in Slovenia; the Paris Guitar Foundation; Zurich University of the Arts; Taipei National Theater; Shanghai Grand Theater; and the Hong Kong International Guitar Festival.

In North America, he has performed at Austin Classical Guitar; Beyond Microtonal Music Festival/Pittsburgh; the Dallas Opera for performances of Peter Maxwell Davies's *The Lighthouse*; Dumbarton Concerts/Washington, D.C.; The Kennedy Center/Washington, D.C.; Mainly Mozart/San Diego; the National Gallery of Art; NAMM Show/California; Strathmore Hall/Maryland; the New York Classical Guitar Society; the Pacific Symphony; Triangle Guitar Society/North Carolina; Walt Disney Hall/Los Angeles; and numerous other venues and guitar societies across the globe.

An enthusiastic recording artist, Mak's latest recordings, “Balkanisms” for Naxos Music plus “MAKrotonal” and Grammy®- nominated “Mak|Bach” for MicroFest Records, explore a vast repertoire spanning ethnic music, microtonal, new music and early music on re-fretted instruments, such as a “zig-zag fretted Bach prototype guitar” that allows him to create a “well- tempered guitar” for “Mak|Bach.” Mak is also featured on another Naxos release, “La Buena Vida” with flamenco guitarist Adam del Monte. Other albums in progress include an homage to Ligeti, spotlighting

gamelan-inspired guitar arrangements; "Peaceful Guitar" on Symphonic, Mak's first recording of his own compositions; and on the Avie label, an all-concerto recording including Rodrigo's "Concierto de Aranjuez" and "Balkan Suite of Dances," a new concerto based on music from "Balkanisms."

Born in Ljubljana, Slovenia, in 1987, Mak studied guitar in Zagreb with the revered Ante Cagalj at the Elly Basic Music Academy. By the age of 14, he was balancing his world champion status in karate with his love for the guitar. Following an injury to his left thumb, he made the decision to focus solely on a career in music, going on to complete a bachelor's degree with Alvaro Pierri at the University for Music and Performing Arts in Vienna. In the fall of 2017, he began the Artist Diploma program at USC, the first guitarist in the university's history to be admitted to this elite program. Mak currently holds a full time teaching position at University of South Carolina, and is a founder and CEO of Notey, a startup building a mobile music education game.

Mak Grgić is also proud to be involved with the Bosana Foundation, an organization that raises money for Bosnian youth. He regularly awards education-furthering scholarships to select students across South America.

"Imaginative, Expressive."

New York Times