



THE UNIVERSITY OF
MEMPHIS®

Rudi E. Scheidt
School of Music

presents

Memphis International Guitar Festival

Lily Afshar, guitar
Meng Su, guitar

This concert is sponsored by a Grant from the Augustine Foundation.

Sunday, March 20, 2022
7:30PM
Harris Concert Hall

Rudi E. Scheidt School of Music
Kevin Sanders, Director

College of Communication and Fine Arts
Anne Hogan, Dean

PROGRAM

Lily Afshar, guitar

- Introduction & Variations on a Theme of Mozart, Op. 9
Fernando Sor
(1778-1839)
- from *Caprichos de Goya*
El Sueno de la Razon Produce Monstruos
Quien mas Rendido?
Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco
(1895-1968)
- Two Persian Ballads
Jaan-e- Maryam
Dokhtareh Boyer Ahmadi
arr. by Lily Afshar
- L'encouragement, Op. 34 for two guitars
Sor
Lily Afshar
René Izquierdo
- Theme and Variations from *Sextet in B-flat*, Op. 18 for two guitars
Johannes Brahms
(1833-1897)
Lily Afshar
René Izquierdo
- Misionera
Fernando Bustamante
(1915-1979)
arr. by Afshar

Intermission

Meng Su, guitar

- Fantaisie dramatique "Le depart," Op.31
Napoleon Coste
(1805-1883)
- Variazioni sul Carnevale di Venezia
Niccolo Paganini
(1782-1840)
- Seven Desires
Tan Dun
(b.1957)
- Five Bagatelles
Allegro assai
Lento alla cubana
Sempre espressivo
Presto con slancia
William Walton
(1902-1983)

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

An extraordinary artist, **Lily Afshar** has grounded her career on a strong foundation of excellent formal education, upon which she has built an exceptional record of innovative achievements. With a bachelor's degree from The Boston Conservatory, she earned her Master of Music at The New England Conservatory and went on to study at Florida State University, where she became the first woman in the world to be awarded the degree of Doctor of Music in guitar performance. She pursued greater proficiency with summer studies at the Banff Centre for Fine Arts and the Aspen Music Festival, advanced training at Gargnano, Italy, the Accademia Musicale Chigiana in Siena, and master classes with Andrés Segovia at the University of Southern California.

Since becoming a tenured professor and head of the guitar program at the University of Memphis Rudi E. Scheidt School of Music, Afshar has received the 2000 Eminent Faculty Award, and in 2011 she was honored with the Distinguished Alumni Award from The Boston Conservatory. She conducts master classes worldwide and has released seven instructional DVD's. As a performing guitarist, she has won a top prize in the Guitar Foundation of America Competition, Grand Prize in the Aspen Music Festival Guitar Competition, the Orville H. Gibson Award for Best Female Classical Guitarist, and a National Endowment for the Arts Recording Award, among others, and she was chosen as an "Artistic Ambassador" to Africa for the United States Information Agency.

With her passion for going beyond the traditional guitar repertoire, contemporary classical composers have sought after her for creative collaborations resulting in notable world premieres, including works by Carlo Domeniconi, Reza Vali, Garry Eister, Gerard Drozd, Loris Chobanian, Arne Mellnas, Kamran Ince, Barbara Kolb, Marilyn Ziffrin, David Kechley, and Salvador Brotons. Most of these can be heard on her seven CDs. Her first recording, "24 Caprichos de Goya, Op. 195" (1994) composed by Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco led her to develop a unique multimedia concert combining performance and commentary along with a visual presentation of Francisco Goya's satirical black and white etchings which inspired the guitar pieces. She still receives special requests to present this unique program today.

Her second recording, "A Jug of Wine and Thou," (1999) was inspired by the famous poem of Omar Khayyam and features arrangements of Persian melodies. Afshar was now attracting the interest of international composers and her third and fourth recordings, "Possession" (2002) and "Hemispheres" (2006) feature a combined total of eight world premieres. "Hemispheres" reached No. 7 on Billboard Magazine's Chart of Top Classical Albums in 2006 and attracted the attention of National Public Radio's Robert Siegel, who featured Afshar on "All Things Considered." Next came "One Thousand and One Nights," (2012) which was recorded and released in Iran. Her sixth album and chamber recording, "Musica da Camera" (2013), featured a world premiere by Russian composer Vladislav Uspensky in addition to compositions by Niccolò Paganini and Astor Piazzolla. Her latest album, "Bach on Fire" (2014), highlights a completely unique and intricate approach to J.S. Bach's guitar compositions. The arrangements on the album were taken from her book with Mel Bay's Essential Bach: Arranged for the Guitar by Lily Afshar.

Multifaceted guitarist **Meng Su** is captivating audiences around the world with her stunning virtuosity and refined artistry. New York Concert Review called her performance “seemingly effortless and stunningly polished.... Add to that a beautiful – and fashionable! – stage presence, and she is poised to be in high demand” while Classical Guitar Magazine wrote that “she has already reached the status of a seasoned artist.”

In addition to her busy solo career, Meng Su is an avid chamber musician who tours regularly in the Beijing Guitar Duo and as a soloist with orchestras. Ms. Su has performed in over 30 different countries around the world in halls such as the Concertgebouw, Palau de Musica, Tchaikovsky Hall and the National Centre for the Performing Arts in Beijing. This past summer, Ms. Su collaborated with ballerina YuanYuan Tan in a dance musical and toured China together to critical acclaim. Meng Su’s performances and recordings have impressed the public with “an ability and artistry that exceeds her years.” (Baltimore Sun) Her debut duo CD “Maracaípe” received a Latin Grammy nomination for the titled piece, which was dedicated to the Duo by renowned guitarist/composer Sergio Assad. Their second CD, “Bach to Tan Dun,” a “must-listen” according to composer Tan Dun, has been widely noted for the world-premiere recording of his “Eight Memories in Watercolor.” A recording in trio, “China West,” with Maestro Barrueco and the Beijing Guitar Duo was released in May 2014 to critical acclaim. Meng Su’s debut solo recording “Meng,” released in 2016 was called “awe-inspiring” and “this year’s finest debut by far” by Classical Guitar Magazine. Born in Qingdao, China, Meng Su began studying the guitar at the age of 5 and showed her talents from an early age under the guidance of Prof. Chen Zhi at the Central Conservatory in Beijing. Meng Su has won first-prize in numerous international competitions around the world, the last one being in the prestigious Parkening International Guitar competition in 2015. She graduated with an Artist Diploma, a Master’s Degree and Graduate Diploma in Chamber Music with Maestro Manuel Barrueco at the Peabody Conservatory of the Johns Hopkins University. Meng Su teaches at The San Francisco Conservatory of Music, and she is the Artist-in-residence for the Baltimore Classical Guitar Society.