

Sean Shibe

Guitar



“Genius, a term which should rarely be applied to performing musicians, but at 25 he has it.”
Arts Desk

One of the foremost guitarists of his generation, **Sean Shibe** brings a fresh and innovative approach to the traditional classical guitar by experimenting with instruments and repertoire.

The first guitarist to be selected for the **BBC Radio 3 New Generation Artists** scheme, and to be awarded a **Borletti-Buitoni Trust Fellowship**, he was selected for representation by the **Young Classical Artists Trust** artist between 2015-2017. In 2018, Sean Shibe became the first guitarist to receive the **Royal Philharmonic Society Award for Young Artists**; and in 2019, he won a **Gramophone Award** in the newly-created ‘Concept Album’ category for his critically acclaimed recording *softLOUD*. Further awards include the Royal Over-Seas League First Prize and

Gold Medal (2011); Ivor Mairants Guitar Award (2009); and a Dewar Arts and D’Addario endorsement.

Sean Shibe’s commitment to expanding the repertoire for his instrument sees him conceive imaginative programmes, heavily featuring new music, as well as newly commissioned works; recent and future performances include new music by James MacMillan, Daniel Kidane, Brian Bolger, David Fennessy, Sofia Gubaidulina, and the premiere of a reworked version of Georges Lentz’s *Ingwe*, in collaboration with the composer himself. New commissions include Mark Simpson, Liam Paterson, David Fennessy, Freya Waley-Cohen, and young Welsh composer Sylvia Villa.

Recent highlights include performances at the Southbank Centre in London, MiTo Settembre Musica Festival, Liszt Academy in Budapest, RNCM in Manchester, and Serefiye Cistern Concerts series in Istanbul. After a five-star recital of electric and acoustic works at Wigmore Hall in March 2020, Sean was one of the first artists to return to the Hall for their new socially-distanced concert series in June, receiving five stars from *The Guardian* for his ‘irresistible style and authority...a nonchalant virtuoso and boundary breaker’. Sean’s new, chart-topping recording of Bach lute suites arranged for guitar was also released in May 2020 on Delphian Records. The disc received considerable attention in the press – Sean was the cover star of *Gramophone Magazine*’s June 2020 issue, in which the disc was named **Editor’s Choice**, *The Times* and *The Scotsman* both awarded the disc five stars, and *Presto Classical* and *Europadisc* both named the recording ‘**Disc of the Week**’.

In the 20-21 season, he returns to the Lammermuir Festival, Wigmore Hall, Frankfurt Alte Oper and the Oxford Lieder Festival. He also performs with Mark Padmore, Mark Simpson, the Van Kuik Quartet and the Trondheim Symphony Orchestra at the Trondheim Chamber Music Festival. He signed as an exclusive recording artist with Pentatone and looks forward to the first project with the label.

Sean’s debut album *Dreams and Fancies* was released in 2017 on Delphian; a recording that explores the fruits of Julian Bream’s history of commissioning in the 20th Century alongside music by Dowland, it was named **Editor’s Choice in Gramophone** and **BBC Music Magazine Instrumental Choice**. It was also nominated in the **BBC Music Magazine ‘Instrumental Award’** category. In 2018, Sean Shibe released his

second album, *softLOUD*, on Delphian. A revelatory and experimental programme, *softLOUD* includes a combination of acoustic and electric guitar, bringing together ancient and modern traditions in a collection of music ranging from Scottish lute manuscripts to electric guitar arrangements of Steve Reich’s *Electric Counterpoint*, Julia Wolfe’s *LAD*, (originally written for 9 bagpipes) and David Lang’s *Killer*. The live programme resulted in Shibe being shortlisted in both ‘**Instrumentalist**’ and ‘**Young Artist**’ categories at the **Royal Philharmonic Society Awards**, and was hailed as ‘spectacular’ (*Gramophone*) and ‘gripping’ (*The Guardian*). Further recordings include solo works by Maxwell Davies on Linn with the Scottish Chamber Orchestra, and John Adams *Naive and Sentimental Music* with the Royal Scottish National Orchestra on Chandos.

He has performed at internationally renowned venues and festivals including Alte Oper Frankfurt, Heidelberger-Frühling, Festspiele Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Mosel Musik Festival, Musashino Hall in Tokyo, and the Bath, Lammermuir, East Neuk and Aldeburgh Festivals. He returned to the Marlboro Summer Music Festival on the invitation of Mitsuko Uchida, and has toured China extensively.

He has appeared with the BBC Scottish Symphony, BBC National Orchestra of Wales, BBC Symphony, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, Royal Northern Sinfonia, Pacific Symphony, and Trondheim Symphony Orchestras performing amongst others, Rodrigo’s *Concierto de Aranjuez* and *Fantasia para un Gentilhombre*, the Malcolm Arnold and Villa-Lobos Concertos.

Recent collaborators include the BBC Singers, Danish String Quartet, flautist Adam Walker, cellist Isang Enders, harpsichordist Mahan Esfahani and singers Allan Clayton, Ben Johnson, Robert Murray and Robert Tritschler; and performance artist and art filmmaker Marina Abramović.

Born in Edinburgh in 1992 of English and Japanese heritage, Sean Shibe studied at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland and with Paolo Pegoraro in Italy. He is a D’Addario Endorsee, and performs on these strings exclusively.

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