

NOVA Guitar Duo

Hailed as “a guitar ensemble of the finest grade” by the German newspaper *Neue Westfälische*, the NOVA Guitar Duo was formed when both of its members were studying at the Royal College of Music in London. Driven by the extended possibilities allowed by the unusual combination of the 6 and the 8-string guitar, also known as “Brahms-guitar”, the duo explores the extensive original guitar duo repertoire as well as their refreshing own arrangements of music originally written for other instruments and ensembles. A member of Yehudi Menuhin's Live-Music-Now scheme, the NOVA Guitar Duo has performed in some of the finest UK venues and festivals, such as the London Guitar Festival in Kings Place, Wigmore Hall, Buxton Festival, St. John's Smith Square and Royal Albert Hall. In 2017, they gave the UK premiere of French composer Germaine Tailleferre's *Concerto for Two Guitars and Orchestra* at RCM's Britten Theatre. Highlights of the current season include the release of their first CD with works by Mompou, Villa-Lobos and de Falla, as well as a New York debut concert at Carnegie Hall's Weill Recital Hall through the Pro Musicis Foundation.

Nelly von Alven, 6-string guitar

German guitarist Nelly von Alven is a prizewinner at numerous national and international competitions, such as the “Barmenia-Competition” (Germany), the “International Guitar Competition Gevelsberg” (Germany), the “Twents Guitar Festival” (NL) and the “Royal College of Music's Guitar Competition” (UK). She regularly performs as a soloist and chamber musician in the UK and abroad. In 2017, Nelly played Rodrigo's *Concierto de Aranjuez* with the *Freien Sinfoniker Bielefeld* in Germany as well as Tedesco's *String Quintet* at the “Young Virtuosi” Festival in France. In the summer 2015, Nelly's debut CD *Canto spirituoso* was produced and published by Fibonacci Records. The album contains several debut recordings, like *Canto spirituoso* by Rossen Balkanski, as well as her own compositions. Nelly holds a Bachelor of Music degree with honours from the University of Music Cologne and a Master of Performance degree with distinction from the Royal College of Music in London. During her studies in London, she was a “Keith Poole Award” recipient. Since 2016, Nelly is also supported by the “Worshipful Company of Musicians” in London. Besides her performing career, Nelly currently teaches at the Millbank Academy in London.

Luiz Mantovani, 8-string guitar

A winner of the Pro Musicis International Award (New York, 2001), Luiz Mantovani has appeared in some of the most important concert venues of his native Brazil and abroad. His performance of Walton's *Five Bagatelles* in Weill Hall/Carnegie Hall was described by *The New York Times* as “powerful, beautifully shaped and just practically flawless”. An active chamber musician, Mr Mantovani was a member of the Brazilian Guitar Quartet for 11 years, with which he recorded three CDs, including the 2011 Latin Grammy winner “BGQ plays Villa-Lobos”. He is currently a CAPES-sponsored PhD candidate at the Royal College of Music in London, where he investigates the chamber sonatas of Austrian composer Ferdinand Rebay. The first guitarist to receive an Artist Diploma from the New England Conservatory of Boston, Luiz Mantovani also holds a Master's degree from NEC and a Bachelor's degree from the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro. His guitar teachers were David Leisner, Nicolas Barros and Antônio Guedes. Since 2003 he teaches guitar and chamber music at the State University of Santa Catarina, in Florianopolis, Brazil.