

NOVA Guitar Duo

The NOVA Guitar Duo's unique instrumentation combines the regular guitar and the eight-string "Brahms" guitar, substantially increasing the ensemble's available range. Described as "lyrical and powerful" by Classical Guitar, the German–Brazilian duo was formed whilst both of its members were studying at the Royal College of Music in London, England. Their programmes explore the extensive repertoire for two guitars, as well as their own innovative arrangements of music originally written for other instruments and ensembles. A member of Yehudi Menuhin's Live-Music-Now scheme, the duo has played in some of the finest UK venues and festivals, including the London Guitar Festival in Kings Place, Wigmore Hall, Buxton Festival, St. John's Smith Square and Royal Albert Hall. In 2017, the NOVA Guitar Duo gave the UK premiere of French composer Germaine Tailleferre's Concerto for Two Guitars and Orchestra at RCM's Britten Theatre, and in 2018 performed its New York debut concert at Carnegie Hall's Weill Recital Hall, through the Pro Musicis Foundation. Their debut album, "Sortilegios," was released in December 2018 by the Italian label Stradivarius, and features music by de Falla, Mompou and Villa-Lobos.

Nelly von Alven, 6-string guitar

German guitarist Nelly von Alven is a prizewinner at numerous national and international competitions, including the Barmenia Competition (Germany), the International Guitar Competition Gevelsberg (Germany), the Twents Guitar Festival (Netherlands) 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 Castelnuovo-Tedesco's *Quintet for Guitar and Strings* at the Young Virtuosi Festival in France. Her debut CD, "Canto spirituoso", was released by Fibonacci Records in the summer 2015. 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, where she was a "Keith Poole Award" recipient. Since 2016, she is supported by the Worshipful Company of Musicians in London. Besides her performing career, Nelly 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". At ease both in the performance and research fields, he earned a PhD from the Royal College of Music in London by investigating the chamber sonatas of Austrian composer Ferdinand Rebay. The first guitarist to receive an Artist Diploma from the New England Conservatory of Music in 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.