XUEFEI YANG

Born in Beijing, now based in the UK, Xuefei Yang (Fei) is acclaimed as one of the world’s finest classical guitarists.

Born following the Cultural Revolution, an era where Western music & instruments were banned, the fascinating story of Fei’s rise to the world stage, is that of a musical pioneer. She was the first ever guitarist in China to enter a music school, and became the first to launch an international professional career. Prodigious musical talent was evident at all stages.

Her first public appearance at the age of ten, at the China International Guitar Festival, received such acclaim that the Spanish Ambassador in China immediately presented her with a concert guitar. The composer Rodrigo attended her debut concert in Madrid when she was fourteen and in 1995, when John Williams came to Beijing, he was so impressed with her playing that he gave two of his own Smallman guitars to her Conservatory especially for Fei and other top students to play.

As the first ever Chinese student to be awarded a full international scholarship to the Royal Academy of Music in London, Fei completed her postgraduate studies with DipRAM, and was also honored with the Principal’s Prize. In 2005, Fei received further recognition from the Royal Academy for her outstanding achievements, when they granted her the title of Associate.

As a professional musician, Fei has performed concerts in 40 countries throughout the UK, Europe, Asia and North America.

The demand for her music sees Fei keeping a busy international schedule including London’s major venues (with several sell-out recitals at London’s Wigmore Hall), and concerts at the world’s most prestigious venues including Philharmonie Berlin, Concertgebouw Amsterdam, Konzerthaus Vienna, Laeiszhalle Hamburg, National Auditorium Madrid, Dvorak Hall Prague, Lincoln Center New York, plus the main venues across Asia. Fei gave the first solo guitar recital ever in Beijing’s National Centre of Performing Arts.

In 2003 she performed 54 concerts for the “Night of the Proms” Tour, appearing in Belgium, The Netherlands and Germany, to a total audience of over 800,000 people. Fei is regularly invited to perform concertos with leading orchestras. This season sees Fei performing with the Zurich Chamber Orchestra, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, Barcelona Symphony Orchestra, RTE National Symphony Orchestra of Ireland as well as tours with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, and Northern Sinfonia.
In addition to her solo career, Fei regularly appears in collaborations with other musicians. Her most recent project is with cellist Natalie Clein. They have performed in Europe and Asia, and they continue to tour this season.

Off-stage, Fei is actively expanding the guitar repertoire, with her own arrangements of pieces (with a particular interest in adding Chinese music to the repertoire), and collaborations with composers (in particular a close collaboration with British composer Stephen Goss). The result is several substantial and exciting new works for the instrument, which have found their way onto the concert stage, and into the recording studio.

Fei has an exclusive international recording contract with EMI Classics. Her EMI debut album “Romance de Amor” achieved gold disc status in Hong Kong, & her second “40 Degrees North”, featuring music from Spain and China was chosen as "Best Instrumental CD of 2008” by Canton Radio station in China, and Editor’s Choice in Gramophone Magazine. Prior to signing with EMI, Fei had released two other CD’s.

Fei has appeared on numerous radio and television programmes, including BBC Radio 4 Woman’s Hour, BBC Proms, BBC’s documentary “The Story of Guitar,” ITV’s Classic BRIT’s, and China Central Television, who made a biographical documentary on Fei for their classical musician series.