

Olga Amelkina-Vera

2021 NAFME All-National
Guitar Ensemble

Olga Amelkina-Vera's works have been called “the discovery of the evening” (Sarasota Herald-Tribune), “brilliant” (The Royal Gazette), “incandescent” and “hypnotic” (Fort Worth Star Telegram). A guitarist and composer, she grew up in Belarus and moved to the United States in 1997. Olga holds a Bachelor of Arts degree Summa Cum Laude from the University of St. Thomas in Houston, a Master of Music and Doctor of Musical Arts degrees in guitar performance with a minor in music history from the University of North Texas, and a Masters degree in composition from Southern Methodist University in Dallas. Her SMU thesis composition, Submerged Worlds for flute, clarinet, violin, cello, piano and percussion, won the 2017-2018 American Prize in the instrumental chamber music division. Her comic micro-opera All That Glitters won third prize in the theater/film/opera/dance division of the same competition. Olga was chosen as the Irving Symphony Orchestra student composer-in-residence for the 2016-2017 season. Her solo guitar work The Heaven’s Hundred for solo guitar won third prize in the 2018-2019 American Prize competition in the instrumental chamber music division.



Olga won first prize in the 2013 Japan Guitar Ensemble Composition Competition for her quartet Cattywampus Rompus (Texas Tarantella) and was interviewed in Gendai Guitar during her trip to Tokyo. She was the first prize winner of the Austin Classical Guitar Society Composition Competition in 2009 and 2012 for her guitar quartets Ninochka and Nebulae. Her compositions are published by Productions d’Oz, including two works selected for the Frank Koonce Series. Olga’s guitar works are regularly performed and recorded by Matt Palmer, Rene Izquierdo, Adam Holzman, Thibaut Garcia, Xavier Jara, Weimar Guitar Quartet, Kacherski-Morita Duo, Clarinet Meets Guitar, Quattro Palos Guitar Quartet, Kithara Duo, and many other professional and student ensembles and soloists. She is in demand as an educator, conductor and artist-in-residence, frequently getting invitations to perform solo and conduct her music with guitar orchestras throughout the country. Most recent engagements include Florida Music Educators Association All-State Guitar Orchestra, Indiana University Guitar Ensemble Festival, Pacific Lutheran University Guitar Ensemble Festival, as well as residencies and guitar ensemble commissions for St. Louis Classical Guitar, Harrison School for the Arts in Lakeland, FL and Park View High School in Sterling, VA.

Olga performs solo and as a founding member of Kithara Duo, her guitar duo with Fernand Vera. Kithara Duo has been invited to perform and teach at numerous festivals and universities throughout the country, such as the Guitar Foundation of America Convention and Competition, St. Louis Classical Guitar Society Great Artist Series, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Guitar Sarasota, Texas A&M International Guitar Symposium, Florida State University Guitar Festival, and many other venues. In addition, the ensemble enjoys outreach presentations, and has been hailed as “great communicators to both children and adults” (St. Louis Classical Guitar). Kithara Duo are now represented by the LA-based Frameworks label,

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and are working on a new album that will feature Olga's recent compositions performed by a star roster of artists.

To learn more about Kithara Duo, please visit kitharaduo.com and facebook.com/kitharaduo. For more information on Olga's compositions, please see ogaamelkinavera.com and facebook.com/olgaamelkinaveracomposer.