

Iliana Matos

Hailed by the critics as "The guitar guru" (E-Veritas. University of Miami) "the powerful and intense style of Iliana Matos" (Classical Guitar Magazine) has made possible an extraordinary career. Following the tradition of María Luisa Anido, the Great Lady of Guitar, who, when hearing Iliana play, wrote: "I am impressed by your wonderful guitaristic art, and I am proud to know that a woman (and a Cuban woman!) came to such a degree of artistic perfection". Barcelona 1995.

After hearing Iliana Matos perform in Caracas, the legendary Alirio Díaz wrote: "Her refined technique, always put at the service of a personal musicality, is what more can surprise in the guitar art of the Cuban and Latin American virtuosa Iliana Matos. All this, added to other exquisite qualities, has made her an appealing personality within our world of music". Venezuela 1992.

Iliana Matos graduated from the National School of Art in Havana where she studied with José Angel Pérez Puente. She earned a Bachelor of Music (Classical Guitar Performance) from the Superior Institute of Havana (where her teachers included Rey Guerra, Miguel Bonachea and Jesús Ortega), and received a Special Diploma given to the most outstanding graduate for her artistic creative work. She continued her studies with Gabriel Estarellas at the Royal Music Conservatory of Madrid and graduated with a Master of Music Degree from de Extremadura University under Ricardo Gallén. As a student she participated in master classes with Leo Brouwer, David Russell, Sharon Isbin, Costas Cotsiolis, Tania Chagnot, Paolo Paolini, Tomás Müller, Wolfgang Lendle, Carlos Bonell, Juan Carlos Rivera and Joaquín Clerch.

Prize winner of eleven major international competitions, including first prizes in the Andrés Segovia in Palma de Mallorca, Luys Milán, and Manuel Ponce International Guitar Competitions. She made history by becoming the first woman to win the prestigious S.A.R. La Infanta Doña Cristina International Guitar Competition, and the only person to win the special prize for Best Interpretation of Spanish Music in two consecutive years, 1995 and 1996.

Her highly acclaimed GSP CD "Angels in The Street" has earned universal acclaim from critics, placing her among the elite of today's classical guitarists: "Her name deserves to go down in guitar history as one of the great players of our time." (Classical Guitar Magazine); "a match-made-in-heaven recording that is about as perfect as guitar records get... she simply, radiantly shines, a virtuoso in service to the music" (American Record Guide); "she has sufficient of all credentials necessary to take her place in the annals of guitar as one of its truly gifted and outstanding exponents." (Musicweb-international.com), "it's impossible while listening to 'Angels' to believe that her name will not someday ring the same peal of recognition as does Bream and Williams" (Minor7th.com).

As an ambassador of the Ibero-American guitar, she performed as soloist with the National Orchestra of Oporto at the VIII Ibero-American Summit and for the Spanish Royal Family in 1998.