

## Göran Söllscher

### *Guitar*

From his live performances and remarkable recordings for Deutsche Grammophon, Swedish guitarist Göran Söllscher has earned resounding praise for his exceptional musicality as well as his dedication to expanding the solo guitar repertoire. Since winning the 1978 Paris International Guitar Competition, has performed throughout the world – Europe, North and South America, China, Japan, Scandinavia – in recitals and as guest soloist with symphony orchestras, often playing on a highly unusual 11-string guitar. He regularly performs with all the major Scandinavian orchestras, and has played with the Japan Philharmonic in Tokyo, Camerata Bern, the English Chamber Orchestra, the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra in London, New York's Orpheus Chamber Orchestra and the Chamber Orchestra of Europe under such conductors as Claudio Abbado, Rafael Frühbeck de Burgos, Sixten Ehrling, Woldemar Nelsson and Esa-Pekka Salonen.

Among many career highlights, he was selected to perform the "Concerto di Aranjuez" at the "International Hommage to Joaquin Rodrigo" in Madrid, honoring the composer's 90th birthday in 1991, also produced that year in Puerto Rico. November 2007 brought his 12th successive tour in Japan where he gives annual recitals and masterclasses. A major Japanese tour in June 1996 included recitals and duo concerts with the Japanese flutist Shigenori Kudo and violinist Gil Shaham. His collaboration with the American violinist led to joint tours in the United States and Europe and a recording for Deutsche Grammophon. Söllscher has been a regular guest performer at the Verbier Festival in Switzerland, and at other important international festivals in Europe..

Mr. Söllscher has an exclusive recording contract with the prestigious German classical label, Deutsche Grammophon who have to date released some 20 plus solo recordings, including a boxed set of the complete works of J.S. Bach's for lute. In 1990 DG released his recordings of three major works for guitar and orchestra, Rodrigo: "Concierto de Aranjuez" and "Fantasía para un gentilhombre" and Villa-Lobos: "Guitar Concerto",

with the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra from New York, which has sold more than 120,000 copies. His 1994 duo-recording with Gil Shaham "Paganini for Two" was on Billboard Magazine's top ten best selling classical albums chart in the US. In 1995 he released *Here, there and everywhere* – a CD with music by The Beatles arranged for solo guitar. 1996 saw the release of another duo album, with the French flutist Patrick Gallois playing music by Astor Piazzolla. *Eleven String Baroque* was released in 2004 and *The Renaissance Album* in 2005 - it won a Grammis Award, the Swedish *Grammy* in 2006 as "Classical Artist of the Year!" *Reverie*, a recording with cellist Jian Wang, was released to much acclaim last year.

Göran Söllscher holds Sweden's sole professorship in guitar. He is a member of the Royal Swedish Academy of Music and frequently appears on Swedish and international radio and television. In January 2006 Mr Söllscher was awarded the Royal Medal *Litteris et Artibus*.

July 2008 - please discard all earlier versions

### Excerpts from Reviews

"A smooth, relaxed playing style, crisp articulation and a tone balancing sweet and dry (perfect for this repertoire) ensures a clarity of projection that allows the listener to grasp the essentials of each piece while ensuring ample space for fantasy to work its magic."

International Record Review – February 2006

"Since his first album he has given his audience a wide variety of recordings ranging from Beatles to Bach from Barrios to Hallnäs, Sor and Brouwer, always true to his own ideal of how the guitar should be played. Now Göran Söllscher embarks on a great journey through the Renaissance era with music coming from his magnificent eleven-stringed alto guitar. On this CD Söllscher treats us with music from eleven different composers from the renaissance era. The sound and tone is very clear and crisp with a great sense of form and understanding of the music. As always Göran Söllscher puts together a strong, beautifully executed piece of material for us to listen to. Excellent sound with nice balance."

ClassicalGuitar.nl

“This album takes the playing of Renaissance music on the guitar to a new level. Transcriptions from the Renaissance lute) formed a staple of the guitar repertory from the advent of Segovia well through the 1960s. Around the start of the 17th century, the lute started acquiring extra bass strings, so that the resulting pieces can no longer be played on a standard guitar without mutilation. This has resulted in the almost total eclipse of Renaissance lute music in guitar recitals. Until Göran Söllscher, that is. For Mr Söllscher is one of the few guitarists in the World to play an 11-string alto guitar; and the result of that combination, whether Greensleeves or Bach, is simply magnificent. The present album is a tribute to the late Per-Olof Johnson, the Julian Bream of Sweden and the artist’s teacher. Söllscher’s playing does in fact remind me of Bream’s brilliant recordings from the 60s — and properly so, for no one understood this music like Bream. For me, this was easily the best release of 2005 in any genre: well over an hour, and not a single bad track. When it comes to lute music, you can’t go wrong with Söllscher.”

Amazon.com – January 14, 2006

“A world-class musician, classic repertoire, and a recording team that knows how to maximize studio conditions to produce a CD that's faithful to all concerned--that's what we have in this expertly programmed, masterfully performed, sensitively recorded recital by Swedish guitarist Göran Söllscher. You can't ask for a performer more in touch with his repertoire or his instrument, in this case an 11-string guitar that possesses an impressively vibrant, resonant voice and is capable, thanks to Söllscher's technique and stylistic mastery, of limitless expressive range. And throughout, we hear every line clearly articulated and properly weighted according to context. It's a pleasure to hear such confident, assured playing, infused with what we can only conclude must be sheer joy felt by a musician performing some of his favorite pieces. I found it invigorating and absolutely correct for conveying the personality of Söllscher's guitar and affording uninhibited access to the depth and detail of these engaging works. A pleasure.”

ClassicsToday.com – October 9, 2004

“Wilhelmj’s arrangement of the famous *Ave Maria*, with the piano part arranged for 11-string guitar by Göran Söllscher, concludes the disc and gives Shaham another rich opportunity to demonstrate his brilliant technique in glowing melody and beautifully tuned double-stops. Deutsche Grammophon presents this recital in sound as natural as one could wish. The collaboration is highly successful; there is nothing wrong with the guitarist’s technique or his musical instincts. He plays three of the short dances as guitar solos. Discs score high on all counts: fine music, fine performances, fine sound, and useful notes.”

Fanfare – July/August 2003

“An outstanding recording. Göran Söllscher plays these familiar works with exceptional tone, energy and clarity. His instrument is a custom-built guitar with 11 strings, including bass strings. Not only is the instrument beautiful to listen to but his performance is exceptional. His impressive technique and interpretation make this recording a joy to listen to; I found myself craving more and playing it over and over again. I couldn't ask for more in a guitar performance of Bach and highly recommend this recording.”

Jsbach.org – February 18, 1998

“The Swedish guitarist Goran Sollscher and the New York-based Orpheus ensemble make the movement sound fresh by thoughtfully molding its themes. Mr. Sollscher plays the music with warmth, spirit and clarity.”

New York Times – April 14, 1991

“One of the world’s genuinely great players.”

Music and Musicians

“Glänzenden Fingertechnik und einem sehr schönen dunkelfarbigem Klang.”

Die Zeit

“Meisterschaft ... absolute technische Perfektion.”

Tagesspiegel, Berlin

“Mustergültig klar und mit feinem Gespür für Nuancen... Schwung und blitzhafter  
geschliffener Brillanz.”

Berliner Morgenpost

“... an artist of world class, by any standard, whose playing will certainly impress anyone tempted to regard the guitar as a ‘lesser’ instrument.”

The Gramophone

“Sollscher ... totally eschews superficial virtuosic brilliance in favour of a meditative and fully convincing realization of the polyphonic textures.

HiFi

“High level of technical mastery and elegant musicality.”

The Gramophone

“Ein Meister der leisen Töne!”

*Stuttgarter Nachrichten*